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1975

YA'AKOV MESHORER

NABATAEAN COINS

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PREFACE

The present work is based on a study which was originally written in Hebrew, entitled "The Chronology of the Nabataean Coinage", and which was submitted to the Senate of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem for the degree of Ph.D. and approved by it in 1970.

The study was done under the stimulus and with the encouragement of the late Professor Michael Avi-Yonah, whose pupil I had the great privilege to be throughout the time I attended the Hebrew University.

A significant part of the study was written in the British Museum Room of Coins and Medals, and I am grateful to its staff and especially to the Keeper, Mr. C.K. Jenkins, as well as to Dr. Martin J. Price, for the help and advice they so kindly and generously gave me.

I am indebted to the authorities of the numerous Museums and Collections who made it possible for me to examine their numismatic material — to those of the British Museum, London, the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, the Fitzwilliam Collection, Cambridge, the Ashmolean Collection, Oxford, and the American Numismatic Society Collection, New York; to those also of the public numismatic collections in Copenhagen, The Hague, Vienna, Berlin, Edinburgh, and Munich, as well as of the Institute of Archaeology in the Hebrew University, the Department of Antiquities and Museums, and the Franciscan Biblical School, all of Jerusalem, and the Kadman Numismatic Museum, Tel Aviv.

Among the more important private collections examined were those of Shraga Kedar of Afulah, Nathan Münster, Meir Rozenberger, and Arnold Spear, all of Jerusalem, and Shelomoh Zeitzov of Rishon Le-Zion. To them and to all the authorities of the scores of Museums and the owners of the many private collections who were good enough to place their material at my disposal, but whose names I am unfortunately, because of the limitations of space, unable to mention, I express my deep thanks.

I am particularly grateful to the late Dr. H. Seyrig for the considerable material he was kind enough to collect for me during his stay in Beirut; I am equally grateful to Mr. Shraga Kedar of Afulah and to the late Father A. Spijkerman, O.F.M., of the Fransciscan Biblical School, Jerusalem, for their kind assistance in collecting numismatic material especially for this study.

Since the Hebrew version was completed several years ago, a great deal of further numismatic material has come to light, necessitating numerous changes and additions. The present English version was prepared by Dr. I.H. Levine, who spared no effort in translating the book. To him I express my sincere thanks.

The publication of this volume has been made possible by its inclusion in the Qedem series of publications of the Institute of Archaeology in the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, through its Head, Professor Y. Yadin and Director, J. Aviram; by the considerable financial aid of several of my friends in the Israel Numismatic Society who prefer to remain anonymous; and

by a generous grant from the Dr. Leo Mildenberg Research Fund established by the Leu Bank of Zurich. To all these who have made the publication of this work possible I am deeply grateful.

Most of the coins have been photographed by Ze'ev Radovan, the high standard of whose work is evident in the plates.

We make no claim that this work is in any way complete and that it contains all the numismatic material left by the Nabataeans. More material is daily being brought to light, some of which will undoubtedly be used in the course of time for writing a much fuller and more up-to-date version. The absence of a work devoted for Nabataean coins has long been felt among archaeologists and numismatists alike, and we see little point in waiting for the appearance of yet further coins, of whose existence we are convinced.

It is our earnest hope that this publication may encourage others to take up the study of Nabataean coins and thereby supplement all that we have omitted.

Jerusalem, September 1975 YA'AKOV MESHORER

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ABBREVIATIONS

AASOR	Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research
AJ	Josephus, Jewish Antiquities
AN	Annuaire de numismatique
BASOR	Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research
BJ	Josephus, The Jewish War
BMC	Catalogue of the Greek Coins in the British Museum
CIS	Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum
IEJ	Israel Exploration Journal
JA	Journal asiatique
JBL	Journal of Biblical Literature
MN	Mélanges de numismatique or Mélanges numismatiques
NCh	Numismatic Chronicle
NNM	Numismatic Notes and Monographs
PEFA	Palestine Exploration Fund Annual
QDAP	Quarterly of the Department of Antiquities in Palestine
RAO	Recueil d'archéologie orientale
RB	Revue biblique
RES	Répertoire d'épigraphie sémitique
RN	Revue numismatique
SNG	Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum

Note on C.E. and B.C.E.

C.E. = The Common Era, that is, the period of time common to both Jews and Christians.

B.C.E. = Before the Common Era.

Note on the Nabataean year

The Nabataean year began close to the last quarter of one year and ended some twelve months later. Strictly speaking, therefore, a Nabataean date should mention both years, for example, 15/16. For the most part, however, only the first year has been mentioned.

THE CHRONOLOGY OF NABATAEAN COINAGE

I. THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND[1]

No regular account of the history of the Nabataeans is to be found in any of the ancient sources. There are only chance, sparse descriptions occasioned mainly by the meeting of various rulers of the ancient world with the Nabataeans, for the most part against a military background. Yet these few descriptions combine to present a clear, though superficial, picture of the emergence of the Nabataean kingdom.

A broad reconstruction of the history of the Nabataeans shows that at some time at the beginning of the Hellenistic period they began to consolidate themselves, under the name of Nabatu,[2] as a distinct ethnic entity consisting of an inter-tribal union of Arabian-Aramaean elements, and to establish themselves in various settlements. Thus the Hellenistic period marks the transition from a nomadic to a settled life in clearly defined regions. This ethnic and geographic consolidation led to the emergence of an independent, crystallized culture, which displayed increasing vigour, flourished in the Roman period, and reached its zenith in the first century C.E. When in 106 C.E. the Nabataean kingdom was annexed to the Roman empire and became the Roman Provincia Arabia, the Nabataeans lost their political and ethnic distinctiveness. Their culture waned, flickered, and finally became extinct, so that, except for rare instances, no clear Nabataean remains dating from the end of the second century C.E. are to be found.

The most important account of the Nabataeans during their nomadic period is that of Diodorus.[3] In describing the wars of the Diadochi following the death of Alexander the Great he tells of the invasion of Syria and Phoenicia by Antigonus I, who, in the course of his expedition, came across the 'Arabs' (as Diodorus calls the Nabataeans). Diodorus reports the outcome of the conflict between the Greek commanders and the Nabataeans, and also gives an interesting account of their mode of life and their character, which he thought it 'useful' to describe:

'They live in the open air, claiming as native land a wilderness that has neither rivers nor abundant springs from which it is possible for a hostile army to obtain water. It is their custom neither to plant grain, set out any fruit-bearing tree, use wine, nor construct any house; and if anyone is found acting contrary to this, death is his penalty. They follow this custom because they believe that those who possess these things are, in order to retain the use of them, easily compelled by the powerful to do their bidding. Some of them raise camels, others sheep, pasturing them in the desert. While there are many Arabian tribes

1 Since this work deals with the chronology of the Nabataean coins, it is unnecessary to give a lengthy and detailed historical introduction. Where, for the purpose of elucidating a chronological question, there is a need to go into greater historical detail, this has been done. We have therefore limited ourselves to stating the general assumptions for a history of the development and transformation of the Nabataeans from a nomadic to a settled people.

2 Strabo: *The Geography of Strabo* (Loeb Classical Library, English transl. by H.L. Jones), 16, 4, 2, mentions the names, which disappeared subsequently, of other tribes belonging to the same ethnic group. Of these, the Nabataeans were apparently the most important, and hence gave their name to the tribes living pear them.

3 *Diodorus of Sicily* (Loeb Classical Library, English transl. by R.M. Geer), XIX, 94, 1 — 95, 2. The passage reflects the position at the end of the fourth century B.C.E.

who use the desert as pasture, the Nabataeans far surpass the others in wealth although they are not much more than ten thousand in number; for not a few of them are accustomed to bring down to the sea frankincense and myrrh and the most valuable kinds of spices, which they procure from those who convey them from what is called Arabia Eudaemon. They are exceptionally fond of freedom; and, whenever a strong force of enemies comes near, they take refuge in the desert, using this as a fortress; for it lacks water and cannot be crossed by others, but to them alone, since they have prepared subterranean reservoirs lined with stucco, it furnishes safety. As the earth in some places is clayey and in others is of soft stone, they make great excavations in it, the mouths of which they make very small, but by constantly increasing the width as they dig deeper, they finally make them of such size that each side has a length of one plethrum [about 100 feet]. After filling these reservoirs with rainwater, they close the openings, making them even with the rest of the ground, and they leave signs that are known to themselves but are unrecognizable by others. They water their cattle every other day, so that, if they flee through waterless places, they may not need a continuous supply of water. They themselves use as food flesh and milk and those of the plants that grow from the ground which are suitable for this purpose; for among them there grow the pepper and plenty of the so-called wild honey from trees, which they drink mixed with water. There are also other tribes of Arabs, some of whom even till the soil, mingling with the tribute-paying peoples, and have the same customs as the Syrians, except that they do not dwell in houses.

It appears that such are the customs of the Arabs. But when the time draws near for the national gathering at which those who dwell round about are accustomed to meet, some to sell goods and others to purchase things that are needful to them, they travel to this meeting leaving on *a certain rock* [our emphasis] their possessions and their old men, also their women and their children. This place is exceedingly strong but unwalled, and it is distant two days' journey from the settled country.'

It is evident that at this period Petra was uninhabited and, by reason of its special geographical features, was used by the Nabataeans only when they wished to protect their families and possessions. In the course of time it became a permanent settlement. Later, during the course of Nabataean urbanization, Petra was chosen as the Nabataean capital, because it was naturally and admirably fortified. This took place at an advanced stage in the Nabataeans' existence, apparently at about the middle of the first century B.C.E. and not earlier.

Diodorus' description thus refers to a comparatively early stage in Nabataean history. We have no clear archaeological evidence of this period. Not earlier than the first century B.C.E., such evidences date mostly from the first century C.E., and also from the beginning of the second century C.E. following the establishment of Provincia Arabia. The earliest Nabataean inscriptions also date from the first century B.C.E.[4] These are associated with the beginnings of the monumental construction, architecture and ancient sculpture which were unknown to the Nabataeans before that time.

Distinctive Nabataean coins first made their appearance at about the same time. The inscriptions, the building programme and the

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4 An exception may be the inscription from Khalasa, published by A. Cowley: The Wilderness of Zin, *PEFA* (1914–1915), pp. 145–146. Cowley assigns it tentatively to the days of Aretas II (96 B.C.E.); so too does J. Cantinaeu: *Le Nabatéen*, Paris, 1932, II, pp. 43–44; while F.M. Cross, Jr.: The Oldest Manuscripts from Qumran, *JBL* LXXIV (1955), p. 160, n. 25, dates it possibly earlier, to the days of Aretas I (beginning of the second century B.C.E.), but nevertheless expresses some reservation about this date because of the unreliable copy of the inscription, of which there is only a squeeze, so that there is some doubt about the precise epigraphic character of the letters.

issuance of coins are undoubtedly all an expression of the general political and social development of the Nabataeans at this period. Interestingly enough, it was at this time, too, that Judaea under the last Hasmonaeans achieved a notable measure of development.

The expansion of the Nabataeans into territory formerly under the rule of the Seleucid dynasty, and their 'protection' by the Romans after Pompey's domination of the East in 63 B.C.E., enabled the Nabataeans to strike their own coins. This was initially done in the first century B.C.E. (62–9 B.C.E.) by Obodas II and then by Malichus I and Obodas III. It was to meet their specific military needs that these kings minted coins, for their appearance coincided mainly with years of strenuous warfare. Despite their association at this period primarily with military efforts, they were also used in the thriving trade to which the Nabataeans increasingly turned, becoming in the course of time the region's most important agents between the Middle East and the maritime countries for merchandise from the east and from Arabia. The internal Nabataean market also undoubtedly had need of its own currency. Accordingly, from the days of Aretas IV until the end of the Nabataean kingdom (9 B.C.E. — 106 C.E.) coins were issued in large quantities, reflecting their clear economic function at the time. Nabataean coinage, dominating the local market, then became an important economic instrument in the hands of the Nabataean rulers. It replaced the foreign coins which had comprised the principal currency in the Nabataean market during the preceding period.

Nabataean minting may be divided into two periods, from 62 to 9 B.C.E., and from 9 B.C.E. to 106 C.E., reflecting the course, particularly political, of Nabataean history. One gains the impression that from the days of Aretas IV, the most notable of the Nabataean kings, until the establishment of Provincia Arabia, the Nabataean kingdom enjoyed an organized, 'sovereign' period during which extensive monumental public building took place and Nabataean trade reached its maximum proportions.

Gaza was the principal port used for the export of Nabataean goods to Asia Minor, Greece and Italy. Leuce Come, on the Red Sea, also flourished at this period, since goods destined for the north were dispatched to it from southern Arabia. The important Nabataean cities of Reqem (Petra), Ḥeger (El-Ḥejra), and Avdat also thrived, as did the cities in the Ḥauran region. Monumental tombs with splendid dedicatory inscriptions were erected for wealthy Nabataeans; magnificent sculpture carved in honour of the gods and of posthumously deified kings were set up in imposing temples. Nabataean finds dating from this period, more than from any other, have been discovered in areas remote from their origin. Inscriptions and coins in particular have been brought to light in Italy, Greece, Asia Minor, northern Syria, Nisibis (Mesopotamia), Sinai, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt.[5]

As we shall see later, the striking of Nabataean coins began apparently in the days of Aretas II, a contemporary of Alexander Jannaeus. It is not known how long or when he reigned, but his wars against Alexander Jannaeus took place in the early period of the latter's reign, that is, *ca.* 100 B.C.E.

After the death of Aretas II, the Nabataean kingdom was ruled by Obodas I and Rabbel I, of whom we know almost nothing. The first king of the Nabataeans for whose reign and coins alike we have clear dates is Aretas III, who ruled in Damascus from 84 to 72 B.C.E. Following his loss of Damascus, he apparently continued to reign over the Nabataeans from 72 to 62 B.C.E. in the other regions of their kingdom. In 62 B.C.E. he was succeeded by Obodas II, the first Nabataean king to strike coins bearing Nabataean inscriptions.

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[5] We shall deal later with the most important of these finds. Dr. H. Cahn of Basle kindly sent me photographs of a Nabataean coin found in the excava-

The year 62 B.C.E. also marks the beginning of Roman influence in the East as a result of Pompey's conquest of Judaea and of Nabataea. In 60 B.C.E. Malichus I ascended the throne of the Nabataean kingdom and reigned until 30 B.C.E., when he was succeeded by Obodas III. The two kings are remembered principally for their wars against Herod. In 9 B.C.E., on the death of Obodas III, confusion reigned in the royal court of Petra, then the Nabataean capital. Syllaeus, the commander of the army and the strong man in the Nabataean kingdom, though not a scion of the royal family, seized power. His brief reign of a few months was filled with vicissitudes and convulsions. Control of the kingdom then passed to Aretas IV, the son of Obodas III and the legitimate heir to the throne, who became the greatest of the Nabataean kings. Under his reign of some 50 years the kingdom reached the summit of its cultural, economic, and territorial development. Next to occupy the Nabataean throne were his son Malichus II (40–70 C.E.) and his grandson Rabbel II (70–106 C.E.), under whose reigns the Nabataeans gradually declined, first as a political, and then as a cultural, force.

The decline of the Nabataean kingdom which followed the brilliant reign of Aretas IV was apparently connected with Rome's increasing pressure on the smaller countries of the East. Her aim was to incorporate them into the ambit of the provinces, subject to Rome, which lay along the eastern border of the empire and served as a buffer between it and the Parthian kingdom, Rome's principal enemy. Judaea's antagonism to Roman rule became increasingly violent, leading ultimately to the great Jewish war against Rome in which Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 C.E. In contrast, Nabataean opposition to the Romans lacked the fierce, stubborn resistance of the Jews, if indeed the Nabataeans displayed any opposition at all. Malichus II even dispatched his army to fight alongside the Roman forces against the Jews. By their patient submissiveness to the Roman empire, the Nabataeans ensured their political survival and the continuance of their mode of life for another generation, as happened with the kingdom of Agrippa II, who likewise continued to rule by the grace of the Romans until the end of the first century C.E.

No details exist on the manner in which the Nabataean kingdom was brought to an end by the Romans. Josephus and Strabo are the two most important historiographic sources on the Nabataeans. They have furnished us with an account of the events which took place in about 20–10 B.C.E., at the end of Obodas III's reign, and have also described the personality of Syllaeus. But, unfortunately, they have given us no significant historical information on any other period in the history of the Nabataeans. Josephus and Strabo wrote their works before the fall of the Nabataean kingdom, an event mentioned in several sources. Dio Cassius describes the occurrences of 106 C.E. in one brief, obscure sentence:[6] 'About this same time [after Trajan's victory over the Dacians], Palma, the governor of Syria, subdued the part of Arabia around Petra and made it subject to the Romans.' Whether there was a war between the Romans and the Nabataeans or whether they concluded a treaty without a battle, we do not know. We are inclined to believe that Rabbel II, the last Nabataean king, was 'constrained' to submit to the Romans, in the face of a military threat by Palma, Trajan's commander in the East. In return for this the Romans renounced their war-like intentions and contented themselves with putting an end to the Nabataean kingdom and annexing it to the Roman empire as Provincia Arabia. From an apparently incidental source we infer that, on surrendering to the Romans, the Nabataeans were compelled to pay an indemnity or a

tions at Avanche (the Roman Aventicum) in Switzerland and dating from the days of Aretas IV.

[6] *Dio's Roman History* (Loeb Classical Library, English transl. by E. Cary), LXVIII, 14, 5.

tribute. It is clear, especially after the discovery of the Kurnub hoard,[7] that a considerable number of the silver coins issued by Trajan in the East to commemorate the establishment of Provincia Arabia were overstruck on Nabataean silver coins. This indicates that the Romans, having apparently 'captured' the treasures of the Nabataean kingdom, overstruck these Nabataean coins, perhaps even in the original Nabataean mint, with designs perpetuating the annexation of Provincia Arabia to the Roman empire.

Nabataean coins span no more than about 170 years, reflecting only a limited period in the history of the Nabataeans. Yet they undoubtedly cover the most important phase in the annals of that people. Nabataean culture survived even after the destruction of the kingdom in 106 C.E. Public buildings, monumental tombs bearing Nabataean inscriptions, and documents, dating from after 106 C.E., have been discovered, but the quantity of such materials from the end of the second century C.E. is small. An inscription[8] found in Wadi Firan in Sinai conveys in the most tangible way the end of both the culture and the history of the Nabataeans.

בריך ואלו בר שעדאלהי
דא בשנת 85 להפרכיה ד[י]
בה אחרבו ע[רב]יא ארעא

Blessed be Wa'ilu, the son of Sa'ad-allâhi.
This [was written] in the year 85 of the Eparchy,
in whi[ch] the A[rab]s destroyed the land.

Thus Arab tribes, raiding and pillaging the country towards the end of the second century C.E. (the inscription dates from 191 C.E.), brought about the final extinction of Nabataean culture 85 years after the Nabataean kingdom had lost its political independence.

II. THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF NABATAEAN NUMISMATICS

The first numismatic publication to mention Nabataean coins, though it identified them incorrectly, was the catalogue of the Behr collection compiled by Francois Lenormant,[9] which appeared in 1857. In it Lenormant published one bronze and two silver coins which he called coins of Petra. Although the provenance is not incorrect, no attempt was made to identify the coins either ethnically or politically. Furthermore the reading of the inscriptions is far from accurate. Coin No. 826, for example, a drawing of which also appeared in the catalogue, can be identified without much difficulty as one of Malichus II. Its description is as follows:

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7 Discovered by A. Negev in excavations at Kurnub in 1966, the hoard contained, besides some 8,500 Syrian tetradrachms from Nero to Elagabalus, three Nabataean coins of the days of Rabbel II, as well as 2,000 Roman provincial denarii of Trajan and Hadrian, mainly of the Provincia Arabia type. I wish to express my thanks to Dr. Negev for his kind permission to use this material. He also drew my attention to the Roman overstriking on the Nabataean coins. I believe that these Roman coins were struck at a Nabataean city, either Petra or Bostra, and not at Caesarea in Cappadocia, as is generally believed; see E.A. Sydenham: *The Coinage of Caesarea in Cappadocia*, London, 1933.

8 See G.A. Cooke: *North-Semitic Inscriptions*, Oxford, 1903, p. 260, n. 107: see also *CIS* II, 964; and the comment on this inscription by A. Negev: Nabataean Inscriptions from 'Avdat (Oboda), *IEJ* 13 (1963), p. 124.

9 *Description des médailles et antiquités composant le cabinet de M. le baron Behr*, Paris, 1857, p. 147, Pl. II, No. 11.

Obv. Bust of Malichus r.; inscr. מלכו מלכא מלך נבטו
(Malichus the king, king of the Nabataeans)

Rev. Bust of Shuqailat r.; inscr. שקילת אחתה מלכת נבטו
(Shuqailat his sister, queen of the Nabataeans)

Instead of this reading, now clear to us, Lenormant produced the following:

Obv. בכר מלך אם . . .
(Becr, king of the metropolis . . .)

Rev. מלכת משתע קירת אם ר[קם]
(Meschtâ, queen of the metropolitan city of Petra)

On coin No. 825 Lenormant read זיטל מלך אם רקם (Zithel, king of the metropolitan city of Petra). Since there is no accompanying reproduction, it is impossible to know what coin is meant, but 'Zithel' may be Rabbel.

The first article to describe these coins as Nabataean appeared in 1858. Its author, the Duc de Luynes,[10] who had explored the Dead Sea region, did not hesitate to enlarge on a subject which was strange to him and his contemporaries, so strange in fact that de Luynes' description of the Nabataean coins is full of imaginary historical information and of fanciful readings of the inscriptions on them. He assumed that these inscriptions were written in Palmyraean. While it is true that the Palmyraean script resembles the Nabataean very closely, several letters in the two alphabets differ markedly from one another. Accordingly, some of the readings obtained are very strange, although others are remarkably accurate.

Although de Luynes' attribution of certain coins to various Nabataean rulers and the dates he assigned to the latter are historiographically interesting as an example of groping in the dark, we should remember that this was the pioneer discussion on Nabataean coins. For de Luynes, Nabataean minting began with the coins of Malchus, the contemporary of Alexander Balas,[11] and ended with those of another Malchus, the contemporary of Herod.[12] His reading of the dates on the coins was also incorrect when these were marked in numerals and not in words. In reading the inscriptions he arrived at results such as the following: on coins of Rabbel II (see Catalogue, No. 142) he read מלך [ז]באל [אמ]נו, Zabelus Rex Amani, while he read שקילת (Shuqailat) as שקמנת, Sycaminith.

The last part of de Luynes' article consists of a philological discussion on Nabataean names, of interest only for the history of philology. But what is noteworthy in the article is the fact that this pioneer Nabataean scholar had access to a relatively rich collection of Nabataean coins, principally those in the National Library collection in Paris, which is even today an important source for anyone interested in Nabataean numismatics.

In 1859, an extensive study on Nabataean coins was published by Victor Langlois,[13] who gave an historical survey of the Nabataeans and their coins, and proposed the following chronology.

a. Malchus, 151–146 B.C.E.
b. Aretas I Philhellene, 98–95(?) B.C.E.
c. Aretas II, 66(?)–62 B.C.E.
d. Malchus, 48–30(?) B.C.E.
e. Obodas, 24–7 B.C.E.
f. Aretas
g. Zabelus

To the first king he attributed a coin which we today ascribe to Malichus I (see Catalogue, No. 18); to the second king, both a Nabataean coin of Aretas IV and Damascus coins of Aretas III (see Catalogue, Nos. 50, 6, 7); to the third king he attributed coins of Aretas IV, to the fourth those of Malichus II, to the fifth none, and none also to the last two kings,

10 Duc de Luynes: Monnaies des Nabatéens, *RN* III (1858), pp. 292–316, 362–385, Pls. XIV, XV, XVI.

11 *Ibid.*, p. 293.

12 *Ibid.*, p. 296.

13 *Numismatique des Arabes avant l'Islamisme*, Paris, 1859, Chapt. 1, Royaume de Nabatène, pp. 5–38, Pls. I, II.

whose dates he did not give. While the numismatic material at his disposal was not much greater than that used by de Luynes, the work constitutes an advance in that the inscriptions were read for the first time as Nabataean and not Palmyraean. This was a new approach introduced by Langlois, whose interpretation of the inscriptions, however, is marked by numerous errors.

In 1868 significant progress was made in the study of Nabataean numismatics by M. de Vogüé,[14] whose article is perhaps the most important of the early writings on the subject, containing far-reaching corrections of the imaginary chronologies of de Luynes and Langlois, as well as of the readings of the inscriptions and of the dates. De Vogüé's article is the first in which the elucidation of the dates was done by correlating the numismatic evidence and the historical sources. The dates given by de Vogüé for the Nabataean kings are as follows.

a. Aretas Philhellene, 95–50 B.C.E.
b. Malchus, 50–28 B.C.E.
c. Obodas, 30–7 B.C.E.
d. Aretas, 7 B.C.E. — 40(?) C.E.
e. Malchus, the contemporary of Vespasian, 40–75 C.E.
f. Dabel, Zabelus, 75–104 C.E.

Except for the first two kings, he attributed more or less the correct coins, there being some inaccuracies which need not be enlarged upon here. As we shall see, de Vogüé's chronological outline is basically correct, differing little from what is known today. He was the first to bring Nabataean numismatic research to the stage at which the numismatic material and the historical information complement each other. He was also the first to make a systematic collection of Nabataean coins, now housed in the National Library, Paris, which even today ranks among the best collections in the world.

In 1873, five years after the appearance of de Vogüé's article, the well-known numismatist F. de Saulcy published a more complete study of the coins of the Nabataeans.[15] After reviewing the material written previously, de Saulcy listed all the historical sources which mention the Nabataeans and analysed them with the aim of establishing as precise a chronology of the Nabataean kings as possible. At his disposal was richer numismatic material than had hitherto been available, in particular his own private collection acquired in Palestine and in Transjordan, and the better state of preservation of the coins he examined facilitated the reading of the dates and of the inscriptions. De Saulcy made a further contribution to the study of Nabataean coinage by being the first to distinguish between the coins of Aretas III and those of Aretas IV; he correctly attributed to Aretas III the bronze coins with Greek inscriptions which were minted in Damascus and which resemble the earlier and later coins of that city (on the coins of this king, see below, pp. 12–16).

The dates of the Nabataean kings given by de Saulcy are as follows:

a. Aretas I, 170 B.C.E.
b. Zabel I, Malchus I, 145 B.C.E.
c. Aretas II, 97 B.C.E.
d. Obodas I, 96 B.C.E.
e. Aretas III, 85–62 B.C.E.
f. Hierotimus (not to be identified with Aretas III), 68 B.C.E.
g. Malchus II, 48–31 B.C.E.
h. Obodas II, 24–8/7 B.C.E.
i. Aretas IV, 8/7 B.C.E.
j. Malchus III, 67 C.E.

Despite his efforts to improve both the chronology proposed by de Vogüé and the more extensive historical evidence he cited, de Saulcy's chronology cannot be considered an improvement on that of de Vogüé, and may even represent some retrogression.

The complex chronology of the Nabataean kings and their coins was solved only in

14 Monnaies des rois de Nabatène, *RN*, XIII (1868), pp. 153–168, Pl. V.

15 La numismatique des rois nabathéens de Pétra, *AN* IV (1873), pp. 1–35, Pls. I, II.

1904,[16] when R. Dussaud published his important article on the coins of the Nabataeans.[17] This is still the the best and most complete study on the subject. In it, as in the short supplement which he published a year later,[18] Dussaud described briefly the history of previous research into the Nabataean coins and suggested his own chronology, based not only on the sparse historical sources and on the coins, but also on archaeological finds. The latter comprised the large and growing number of Nabataean inscriptions brought to light at the end of the nineteenth century, especially in the Ḥauran region. Following a re-examination of the historical sources Dussaud arrived at a chronology which constitutes to this day the basic Nabataean chronology; any modifications of it have been relatively minor and insubstantial.

The following are the dates suggested by Dussaud:

a. Aretas I, 169 B.C.E.
b. Aretas II (= Erotimus), 110–96 B.C.E.
c. Obodas I, 90 B.C.E.
d. Rabbel I, 87 B.C.E.
e. Aretas III Philhellene, 87–62 B.C.E.
f. Obodas II, 62–47 B.C.E.
g. Malichus I, 47–30 B.C.E.
h. Obodas III, 30–9 B.C.E.
i. Aretas IV, 9 B.C.E. — 40 C.E.
j. Malichus II, 40–75 C.E.
k. Rabbel II, 75–101 C.E.
l. Malichus III, 101–106 C.E.

Except for the last king, who apparently did not exist (see below, p. 78), the names of the kings as they appear in the list above, and in particular the numerals following their names, are, and will continue to be, accepted, unless new evidence should come to light to invalidate any of its details.

Like de Saulcy, Dussaud made a comparative study of the silver coins of the Nabataeans and of the Ptolemies, but unlike him he did not find it necessary to date the former coins as early as the second century B.C.E. Instead, he assigned their introduction to the middle of the first century B.C.E. He did this on the basis of a purely numismatic study in which he compared the standards of the contemporary silver coins. While de Saulcy also had made such a comparison, Dussaud's chronology was different from that of his predecessor. Dussaud used a large amount of numismatic material and numerous collections in his study. Unfortunately, some of the coins which are very important to an understanding of the chronological problems cannot be traced and hence his statements about them cannot be examined critically. Accordingly, one must rely on his judgment and readings in some instances.

Following Dussaud's study, in 1922 the distinguished scholar G.F. Hill published the British Museum Catalogue.[19] Not content with describing only the Nabataean coins in the British Museum, Hill also included some important specimens found in other collections, which were, in his opinion, essential to complete the picture. His work does not include a detailed discussion, but only remarks on isolated coins based for the most part on Dussaud's article. It is the last of a

16 Short articles on the coins of the Nabataeans were also published before this date, but these generally gave technical details about additional types, or brief comments which contained neither basic corrections of the chronology, nor any new information of fundamental significance. See, for example, F. de Saulcy: Note sur deux monnaies inédites de Palmyre et de la dynastie des rois nabathéens, *AN* I (1877), pp. 462–464; *idem*: Note sur deux monnaies inédites, *MN* III (1882), pp. 193–197; A. Sorlin-Dorigny: Monnaies nabatéennes inédites, *RN* V (1887), pp. 369–371; E. Babelon, *RN* V (1887), pp. 371–377; *idem*, Monnaies nabatéennes inédites, *MN* I (1900), pp. 75–81.

17 R. Dussaud: Numismatique des rois de Nabatène, *JA* III (1904), pp. 189–238, Pls. I–IV.

18 Monnaies Nabatéennes, *RN* IX (1905), pp. 170–176.

19 G.F. Hill, *BMC*: *Arabia, Mesopotamia and Persia*, London, 1922, pp. xi–xxii, 1–13, Pls. I, II, XLIX. In 1912 a short article describing several Nabataean coins was published by A. Decloedt: Monnaies inédites ou peu connues du Medaillier, *RN* XVI (1912), pp. 463–466.

series of general studies on Nabataean coins thus far published.

From 1922 up to the present no exhaustive work appeared on the coins of the Nabataeans, other than some incidental articles dealing with new finds. One was published by E.S.G. Robinson,[20] and another by Father Milik,[21] who described the most important Nabataean find made to date, that of the Murabba'at hoard. These two articles have made it possible to determine the Nabataean chronology even more precisely than was done by Hill.

Most Nabataean coins have not been assigned to specific years or to periods within the reigns of the various Nabataean kings. Because of the scant chronological and numismatic material available to them, earlier scholars found the inner chronology of the Nabataean coins too complex a problem. Yet, as we have seen, they succeeded in establishing a general and remarkably solid framework for such chronology, which we shall seek to set forth in the following pages.

A significant number of coins have either been identified incorrectly or have not been attributed to their 'lawful owners'. This is a matter of cardinal importance in our present study. We shall also endeavour to assign to each coin its proper place in the history of Nabataean minting.

III. THE BEGINNING OF NABATAEAN MINTING

The Mediterranean countries, dependent states and vassal rulers, not to mention ethnic units without an established internal leadership, did not dare to mint their own coins in the Hellenistic period. They were subjected to the sway of Ptolemaic or Seleucid kings, who saw to it that their coins should be the only legal tender in these territories. To these rulers, such independent coinage would have been considered an expression of political autonomy foreboding rebellion and a struggle for liberty.

With the decline of these super-Powers, of the Seleucids in the north and the Ptolemies in the south, the states and small city-states in the East began to act as political entities, with greater and lesser restraint, and with varying degrees of confidence and boldness. This expressed itself in the autonomous minting of coins, a decisive development which apparently did not occur in Judaea until the days of Alexander Jannaeus in 103 B.C.E.,[22] but took place in Tyre as early as in 126/5 B.C.E.,[23] and in Ashkelon in 104 B.C.E.[24] It would, appear, therefore, that towards the end of the second century B.C.E. some Near-Eastern cities and states, only recently liberated from the yoke of the super-Powers, began to mint their own coins. To what extent were the Nabataeans involved in this monetary development?

The coins of Aretas III (Catalogue, Nos. 5–8), which are made exactly like the Seleucid coins minted in Damascus, were normally regarded as the earliest Nabataean coins. They have no clearly Nabataean character, unlike

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20 E.S.G. Robinson: Coins from Petra, etc., *NCh* XVI (1936), pp. 288–291, Pl. XVII.

21 J.T. Milik and H. Seyrig: Trésor monétaire de Murabba'ât, *RN* I (1958), pp. 11–22, Pls. I–III. J. Starcky: Pétra et la Nabatène, *Dictionnaire de la Bible*, Supplément, VII, Paris, 1966, while the most important work on Nabataean culture, contains nothing new on numismatics, being based on previously published material.

22 See Y. Meshorer: *Jewish Coins of the Second Temple Period*, Tel Aviv, 1967, pp. 41–59, and especially pp. 51–52.

23 G.F. Hill: *BMC, Phoenicia*, London, 1910, p. cxxxiv.

24 *Idem*, *BMC, Palestine*, London, 1914, pp. xlviii–xlix.

the Nabataean coins struck from the days of Obodas II onwards.

In 1936 Robinson[25] made the interesting suggestion that a certain group of coins, bearing neither inscriptions nor other distinguishing marks, may be the earliest issue of the Nabataeans. Many collections originating in Palestine and in Transjordan contain a rather common carelessly-made coin, a type whose description is as follows (coin No. 1).

Obv. Head with crested helmet r.

Rev. Nike standing l., holding uncertain object (palm-branch?) in l. hand and wreath in r. (extended to front), her wings, very stylized, having the appearance of drops or dots descending in vertical lines.

In some of the more beautiful coins the letter Λ or A surmounted by a crescent can be distinguished in the field left. Although many scholars were undoubtedly aware of this type, of which we have seen hundreds, they never ventured an identification, for lack of sufficient data. On this enigmatic coin Robinson says: 'Six specimens were also collected [upon the site of Petra] of what appears to be an unknown issue of quasi-barbarous bronze coins, of which there are three other specimens in the Transjordan Museum, also from the site of Petra, and five in the British Museum; the latter with others of the same types were obtained during Sir Flinders Petrie's archaeological campaign at Gaza. Their description is as follows:

8–11. *Obv.* Helmeted head r.

Rev. Nike standing l., with open wings, holding wreath in r. and palm in l.?[26]

8. AE → 14.0 mm.; 2.11 gr. 9. ↑ 17.5 mm.; 3.20 gr. Also 10. ↑ 14.0 mm.; 2.73 gr., Transjordan Museum. 11. ↑ 15.5. mm.; 3.28 gr. B.M. [Pl. XVII.]

These curious coins appear to be imitated from such an original as the bronze of Alexander Bala with the king's head helmeted and a Nike reverse type . . . (*BMC, Seleucid Kings*, pp. 55, Nos. 51 seqq.), not without influence from the gold stater of Alexander the Great; there is also some analogy with the bronze coins bearing the latter's name with his head in an elephant's skin on the *obv.* and Nike on the *rev* . . . The helmet has sometimes the characteritic pot-shape of Bala, sometimes it is closer to the earlier form; occasionally the head gives the impression of not being helmeted at all (No. 9) but of deriving from the Heracles head of the Macedonian coinage. There seems to be no trace of an inscription and the types appear in various stages of disintegration. Characteristic is the rendering of the hair in formal dotted lines — the horsehair of the helmet-crest as well as that of the subject. Their provenance and rough work suggest that these coins may be the earliest issue of the Nabataeans, made perhaps in the reign of Aretas II who was in alliance with Gaza, or at any rate before the expansion of the kingdom into Syria which led to the inauguration of a civilized coinage under Aretas III.'

Robinson's first conclusion, that these coins are to be identified as Nabataean, appears convincing, not only for the reasons he mentions but also because of the fact that the coins always occur in the context of Nabataean issues. Recently a large number of them were found in a hoard of about 800 bronze Nabataean coins of various kings.[27] We are inclined to accept Robinson's second conclusion, that these coins were apparently

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[25] Robinson, *op. cit.* (above, n. 20), pp. 290–291, Pl. XVII, 8–11.

[26] His description of it as a palm-branch was undoubtedly influenced by the Nike type on the other coins he mentions. It is difficult however, to find a coin on which this palm-branch occurs as described by Robinson. The object which generally appears as held in her left hand is not clear.

[27] The hoard was acquired in 1967 by the Kadman Numismatic Museum, Tel Aviv. I am grateful to A. Kindler for his kind permission to use this material.

minted by Aretas II, although we have no direct proof of it. This acceptance comes after further examination of the character of the coins as compared with the other Nabataean issues, and after taking into account certain historical and other factors, mentioned below. Recently, we have seen two specimens which may offer a solution to the problem posed by them. Instead of the letter A in the field left, there is the letter ח for חרתת (Aretas) (see coin No. 4).

A. The Numismatic Factor

The first coins minted autonomously in the Near East, e.g., those struck in Tyre, Ashkelon, Judaea and elsewhere, are all imitations of types of important contemporary coins. In form, the Tyrian shekels and half-shekels are imitations of the tetradrachms and didrachms of the Seleucid rulers,[28] the Ashkelon shekels are imitations of the tetradrachms of the Ptolemaic kings,[29] and, among Jewish coins, certain bronze peruṭot are imitations of the bronze peruṭot of Antiochus VII Euergetes (Sidetes) minted in Jerusalem[30] several years previously. The familiar tendency in the ancient world, to imitate on new coins the designs of current types, was generally an attempt to ensure that such coins would acquire a more official character and be accepted as legal tender. The first distinctly Nabateaan coins are also of this kind.

We return to the group of coins discussed earlier. These coins, still without any clear Nabataean character, represent the earliest stage in a series of Nabataean issues which also tended to imitate types of current coins. It was only at a very advanced stage in their minting that the Nabataean kings ventured to strike coins with a definitely Nabataean character and without any attempt to imitate foreign issues.

B. The Historical Factor

As we have already seen, the end of the second century B.C.E. was the opportune time for various autonomies to 'dare' to mint their own coins with royal permission, a process reinforced with the rise of Rome as a super-Power and with its growing influence in the East.

Alexander Jannaeus, the great Jewish conqueror in the Second Temple period, was probably the first Jewish leader to mint his own coins. Powerful though he was, he was unable to defeat the Nabataeans, and although Josephus says that he subdued them ('the Arabs of Moab and Galaaditis') and forced them to pay tribute, we are told in the same passage that he fell into an ambush laid by Obodas (*'Οβέδας*), king of the Arabs, near Garada. Pushed into a deep ravine by the many camels of the Nabataeans, Alexander Jannaeus escaped with difficulty.[31]

This king was Obodas I, who ruled over the Nabataeans at the beginning of the first century B.C.E., apparently as the immediate successor of Aretas II. Dussaud,[32] who assigns Obodas I to about 90 B.C.E., does so, it seems, on the basis of his involvement in a war against Alexander Jannaeus. There is no doubt that he was a king whose sovereignty was in no way inferior to that of Jannaeus. At that time the political position of the Nabataeans was probably very much the same as that of Judaea. For a long time after Pompey's conquest, too, the Nabataeans and the Jews apparently shared a similar political fate. We are inclined to assume that the bronze coins of the earlier period, which are also less beautiful, were first struck in the days of Aretas II, and that the letter A (like the Nabataean letter ח) may refer to the king's

28 See P. Gardner *BMC, The Seleucid Kings of Syria*, London, 1878, p. 76, Nos. 1–11, Pl. XXI, 1, 2.

29 See R.S. Poole, *BMC, The Ptolemies, Kings of Egypt*, London, 1883, p. 108, Nos. 59–64.

30 See E. Babelon: *Les rois de Syrie*, etc., Paris, 1890, p. 151, No. 1166, Pl. XXII, 1.

31 *AJ* XIII, 374–375.

32 Dussaud, *op. cit.* (above, n. 17), p. 192.

name *APETAΣ*, while the majority of coins, more carelessly made and without any letters or marks, are from the days of Obodas I, whose contemporary, Alexander Jannaeus, also distinguished himself by striking a large quantity of careless coins.[33] The wars which compelled Obodas I to raise a large army undobtedly increased his need of money.

It is difficult, of course, to decide in every instance which of these coins belong to the days of Aretas II and which to those of Obodas I. In general, the larger and more beautiful coins, and certainly those bearing the letter *A*, *A*, or Π are the earlier (Nos. 1, 3). The rest are either from a later period in the life of Aretas II, or from the days of Obodas I. They may even have been minted by Aretas III, who, as we shall see (pp. 12–16), struck coins which bore his name, but were more like those of the city of Damascus than Nabataean issues. Yet there is no reason why Aretas III should not have continued the tradition of his father by minting these bronze coins (type 1, 1A), at least during the period when he no longer ruled in Damascus. The fact that the coins were in circulation for some forty years undoubtedly contributed to their continued acceptance as legal tender at a later period, too, like the more 'perfect' and beautiful bronze Nabataean coins. This is clear from the Kadman Museum hoard, in which such coins were found together with those of Aretas IV, Malichus II, and Rabbel II! The age of the coins, as compared to the others in the hoard, is obvious from their poor state of preservation; all of them, as is usual for the coins of this type, are worn from much use and give the impression of having been in circulation a long time. After the completion of this work, a very important coin was revealed which gives direct support to the theory that coins Nos. 1–4 are Nabataean. This coin, Sup. 1 (see Pl. I), bears a Nabataean portrait, perhaps of Aretas II, in clear archaic style. Its reverse is identical to the careless style of the general 1–4 type. It shows a direct connection between this 'Athena' type and the Nabataeans.

C. The Coins of Aretas III

With the coins of Aretas III we are, for the first time in the history of Nabataean minting, on firm ground. Not only do they all bear clear designs and inscriptions, but also we have some historical information about Aretas III. Hence we are well able to establish the chronology of this group of coins.

When, according to Josephus,[34] the Iturаeans threatened Damascus, after the death of Antiochus XII (84 B.C.E.), Aretas, king of the Nabataeans (Aretas III Philhellene), was invited to rule over the city. 'After his (Antiochus XII's) death Aretas began to reign over Coele-Syria, being called to the throne by those who held Damascus because of their hatred of Ptolemy, the son of Mennaeus. From there he marched on Judaea and defeated Alexander in a battle near the fortress of Adida, but, after coming to terms with him, withdrew from Judaea.'

This Aretas, the ruler of Damascus, struck coins bearing his name in that city. These coins, which clearly have the character of the previously minted Damascus coins, resemble in every respect the local city issues. Their inscriptions are in Greek and not in Aramaic, the language of the Nabataeans. They are thus not Nabataean state coins, but were intended to circulate in Damascus itself, in contrast to the other Nabataean coins, meant for a larger geographical area. They may be seen as a continuation of the Damascus minting. From 84–72 B.C.E. they all bore the name of the Nabataean king, just as they had previously appeared with the name of the Seleucid and subsequently the Armenian king.

To illustrate this, as well as to indicate the special feature of this numismatic period, we shall describe a number of Damascus

33 Meshorer, *op. cit.* (above, n. 22), coins Nos. 10, 11.

34 *AJ* XIII, 392.

coins dating from before and after the reign of Aretas III.

Coin A:[35] 95–84 B.C.E.

Obv. Head of Demetrius III r.; no inscr.

Rev. Tyche of Damascus-Demetrias seated l. on rock, extending r. hand to front, holding cornucopiae in l., river-god swimming, below; inscr. *ΔΗΜΗΤ/ΡΙΕΩΝ/ΤΗΣ/ΙΕΡΑΣ*

Bronze, 8.62 gr., 21 mm.

Coin B:[36] 95–84 B.C.E.

Obv. Head of Tyche of Damascus-Demetrias r.; no inscr.

Rev. Nike standing l., holding wreath in r. hand and palm-branch in l.; inscr. *ΔΗΜΗ/ΤΡΙΕΩΝ/ΤΗΣ/ ΙΕΡΑΣ*

Bronze, 3.16 gr., 16 mm.

Coin C:[37]

Obv. Head of Tigranes, king of Armenia, r.; no inscr.

Rev. Tyche of Damascus seated l. on rock, extending r. hand to front, holding cornucopiae in l., river-god swimming, below; in field, monogram, letters, and inscr. *ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΤΙΓΡΑΝΟΥ*

Bronze 8.43 gr., 22 mm.

Coin D:[38]

Obv. Head of Tigranes, king of Armenia, r.; no inscr.

Rev. Tyche of Damascus seated l. as above; inscr. *ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΤΙΓΡΑΝΟΥ*; in field monogram and letters; in exergue, *ΒΜΣ* (year 242 = 71 B.C.E.)

Silver, 15.77 gr., 27 mm.

Coin E:[39]

Obv. Head of Cleopatra r.; no inscr.

Rev. Tyche of Damascus seated l. as above; inscr. *ΔΑΜΑΣΚΗΝΩΝ*; in field l., *ΛΠΣ* (year 280 = 33 B.C.E.) and small aphlaston.

Bronze, 6.62 gr., 22 mm.

These coins are described by Newell as follows,[40] 'On their obverses, we find the clean-shaven features of Aretas, endowed with the copious locks of the Arab race and a formidably curved nose, quite as hawk-like as those of his Seleucid predecessors, Grypus and Antiochus XII. Perhaps to indicate that under benevolent Nabataean rule Damascus was to lose none of her civic or local power, the reverses of these bronze coins display the city-goddess in various aspects. In one case. . . she stands in the guise of Nike, winged and holding wreath and palm-branch, yet turreted as a city-goddess should be. Again . . . she stands wingless but holding a patera (?) and sceptre. Finally . . . she assumes the familiar attitude peculiar to the Tyche of Damascus. Like the more famous Tyche of Antioch, from whose well-known statue our present type is directly copied, she is seated, turreted, on a rock, while beneath her feet is depicted the swimming figure of the river Chrysaroas. Unlike the Tyche of Antioch, she holds a cornucopiae in her l. arm, and stretches the r. straight out before her, as if blessing with her beneficent powers the happy and industrious populations of her fertile oasis. These particular details always clearly differentiate the Tyche of Damascus from her numerous sisters throughout the Greek world, even down to her last appearance on the issues of the city under the Emperor Volusian, more than three hundred years later'[41]

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35 See W. Wroth: *BMC, Galatia, Cappadocia, and Syria*, London, 1899, p. 289, 1. On the identification of Demetrias with Damascus, see B.V. Head: *Historia Nummorum*, Oxford, 1911, p. 785; Dussaud, *op. cit.* (above, n. 17), pp. 207–208.

36 Wroth, *op. cit.* (above, n. 35), p. 289, 2.

37 Cf. E.T. Newell: Late Seleucid Mints, etc., *NNM* 84 (1939), p. 96, No. 150.

38 Cf. *ibid.*, No. 148.

39 *SNG*, Danish Series, *Syria*: *Cities*, Copenhagen: Danish National Museum, 1959, No. 419.

40 Newell, *op. cit.* (above, n. 37), pp. 93–94.

41 A coin of Aretas III was found far from Damascus in the Nisibis hoard: see H. Seyrig: Trésor monétaire

The Damascus coins of Aretas III were not widely circulated, apparently being intended for Damascus and its environs only. It is within this limited area alone that they are to be found, in contrast to the other Nabataean coins, which are found dispersed over a wide geographical area.

The technique used in striking these coins is identical with that employed in other, earlier issues of the city. The most conspicuous feature is the angle of the axis, which is the same for all the coins, and is characteristic of the Damascus types only.

With the exception of one specimen (No. 5), all the coins are of bronze. For the most part they are fairly common; of type 6, for example, we have seen several dozens. The exception is a group of small coins of half the usual denomination (see Catalogue, No. 8), of which only two specimens have been traced.

The Chronology

Antiochus XII died in 84 B.C.E. We assume that in the same year, immediately after his death, Aretas ascended the throne of Damascus, and, furthermore, that upon his accession the local Damascus mint issued coins in his name. Moreover, until clearer evidence is forthcoming, we are inclined to assume that these coins were minted continuously until the year in which Tigranes, king of Armenia, became the ruler in Damascus. The historical sources make no specific mention of this change of rulers, the only information being derived from numismatic evidence. Among the coins of Tigranes there is one group on which Tyche of Damascus is clearly depicted, unlike his other issues struck in Armenia or Antioch.[42] This numismatic feature has led scholars to the unanimous opinion that this group was minted in Damascus. So striking is the similarity between these coins and those of Aretas III that it may be confidently asserted that the former are a direct continuation of the latter. Fixing the date of the first appearance of the coins of Tigranes in Damascus would help us to fix the date when the minting of Aretas III came to an end in that city.

Like Aretas III, Tigranes also struck silver coins in Damascus, and these, like others of that period, bear a date. However, no date appears on the bronze Damascus coins of Tigranes, or on the bronze and silver coins of Aretas III. The earliest clear date on a Damascus coin of Tigranes, now in the British Museum, is *BMΣ*, i.e., 242[43] of the Seleucid era, corresponding to 71 B.C.E. This, then, is the first year in which coins of Tigranes were struck in Damascus. Hence the Damascus coins of Aretas III could have been minted no later than this year.

While the general limits of the coins of Aretas III, 84–71 B.C.E.,[44] are quite clear, there are no definite data on their inner chronology. Type 7 (Nike standing, in the guise of the city goddess) and type 6 (Tyche of Damascus seated) occurred previously among the coins of that city. Type 6, of which a large number are extant, is the most common, type 7 less so, and type 8 is extremely rare. If any chronological significance can be ascribed to these facts, it may be suggested that type 6 was minted throughout the rule of Aretas III in Damascus (84–71 B.C.E.), and that the other

de Nisibe, *RN* XVII (1955), p. 94, No. 83. But this is an exceptional case. A coin of Hyrcanus II was also unexpectedly found in this hoard. Another coin of Aretas III was discovered in excavations in Antioch: see D.B. Waage: *Antioch-on-the-Orontes*, VI, Part Two, *Greek, Roman, Byzantine and Crusaders' Coins*, Princeton, 1952, p. 88, No. 940.

42 See Newell, *op. cit.* (above, n. 37), pp. 98, 99.

43 Newell, *ibid.*, p. 95, Pl. XVI, 147, has published a coin whose date may be *AMΣ* (that is, 72/71 B.C.E.), but, since its reading is not altogether certain, we prefer, for the present, to begin the dating of the Damascus coins of Tigranes from 71/70 B.C.E., although the earlier year is quite possible.

44 It is naturally difficult to determine whether Aretas III ruled during the whole or only a part of the first and last years of his reign.

coins were issued during a more limited period. We are unable to determine with any certainty exactly where within his rule this 'limited period' fell. A hoard recently brought to light contained several coins of type 6,[45] but none of types 7 and 8. This may indicate that the latter were not yet in circulation when it was hidden away. If this is so, types 7, 7A, and 8 were struck at the end of Aretas III's rule in Damascus, that is, *ca.* 75–71 B.C.E. On the other hand, their absence from the hoard may be fortuitous and thus have no chronological implications.

Type 5, which is of a small denomination, differs somewhat from the usual Damascus coins, and may be a new issue of the local mint, indicating perhaps that some time elapsed before these coins were struck. This may be a further reason for assigning them to the later date of about 73–71 B.C.E.[46] The presence of the unique silver tetradrachm (No. 5) may denote a short minting period, perhaps close to 71 B.C.E.

Josephus has provided some details of Aretas III's reign after 71 B.C.E.[47] During the quarrel in 67–64 B.C.E. between the brothers Hyrcanus II and Aristobulus II, Antipater, encouraging Hyrcanus to fight against Aristobulus, persuaded him to go to Aretas 'the Arab king' and to seek his assistance. Hyrcanus first sent Antipater to obtain from Aretas assurances of his personal safety. Returning to Jerusalem, Antipater secretly took Hyrcanus with him to Petra, where Aretas sat. Antipater prevailed upon Aretas, with whom he was on very friendly terms, to return to Judaea with Hyrcanus. For his part Hyrcanus promised Aretas that, if the king would help him to recover his throne, he would restore to him the twelve cities which Alexander Jannaeus had taken from the Arabs: Medeba, Libba, Eglath, Zoar, Horonaim, Maaleh Haluḥit, Shelishiyah, Arieh (= Ariel), Ḥaluẓei (= Moab), Adamah, Heshbon and Elealeh.[48] With the participation of 50,000 horsemen and footsoldiers an attack was then launched against Aristobulus, who was defeated in battle. Many thereupon defected to Hyrcanus. Being left with only a few supporters, Aristobulus fled to Jerusalem, where he was besieged by Aretas and his army. Only the priests who had fortified themselves with Aristobulus on the Temple Mount remained loyal to him. The combined armies of Aretas and Hyrcanus pressed the siege with increasing vigour and continued doing so until the arrival in Judaea of Scaurus, one of Pompey's generals. Hyrcanus and Aristobulus both sent him envoys, each offering him as much as four hundred talents for his support. Preferring the offer of Aristobulus, who was rich and a large landowner, Scaurus commanded Aretas to lift the siege and return home. On Scaurus' return to Damascus, Aristobulus marched against Hyrcanus and Aretas, and in the battle at Papyron defeated their combined armies, killing six thousand men, including Antipater's brother Phallion.

Arriving on the scene later, Pompey ordered the two sides to become reconciled, and rebuked Aristobulus for trying to deprive Hyrcanus of his rights. Pompey promised to return and settle matters in Judaea 'after he had first seen how things were with the Nabataeans,' but when informed that Aristobulus intended to stir up the people against him, he led his army against Aristobulus instead of

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45 In 1968 we examined a group of five such coins in the possession of a Jerusalem coin dealer. According to him, they had come from a hoard found in the region of Damascus. Their uniform and characteristic patina attested their having indeed come from the same hoard. The coins, the details of which were recorded by us, were bought by A. Spaer, E. Grosswirth, and M. Rosenberger, all of Jerusalem.

46 This type also appeared later under Tigranes: see Newell, *op. cit.* (above, n. 37), p. 97, No. 152.

47 *AJ*, XIV, 14–21.

48 See A. Schalit: Alexander Yannai's Conquests in Moab, *Eretz-Israel*, I (1951), pp. 104–121 (Hebrew); *idem*, Die Eroberungen des Alexander Jannäus in Moab, *Theokratia, Jahrbuch des Institutum Judaicum Delitzschianum*, I: 1967–1969, Leiden, 1970, pp. 3–50.

setting out for Arabia. After many changes of fortune Jerusalem was captured in 63 B.C.E. by Pompey, who then returned to Cilicia and Rome, leaving Scaurus in Syria with two legions. Marching immediately on Petra against the Arabs, Scaurus ravaged the countryside around the city. On the suggestion of Hyrcanus, the Jews supplied Scaurus' army with food. The general then sent Antipater to Aretas to negotiate his surrender and the payment of an indemnity. Having received three thousand talents from Aretas, Scaurus lifted the siege of Petra. This took place in 62 B.C.E.

The capture of Jerusalem by the Roman army and its subsequent victory over the Nabataeans also had an impact on the minting of Roman coins. For our subject it is significant that Aretas III, who in 62 B.C.E. surrendered to Scaurus, is depicted on coins struck by the latter in Rome during his aedileship in 58 B.C.E. These coins [49] show Aretas III kneeling right, holding a camel and filleted olive-branch. This posture, denoting submission, was intended to symbolize or perpetutate on coins the victory of the Romans over the Nabataeans (even as the BACCHIVS IVDAEVS coins [50] represented Pompey's victory in Jerusalem). The coins were struck several years after the event, when Malichus I reigned in Nabataea, yet it is interesting that the artist who engraved the dies of these denarii should have depicted an Oriental figure, wrapped in a long cloak, with long hair falling to the nape of the neck and with a facial expression which resembles more closely those of later Nabataean kings, as they occur on coins, than the features of Aretas III as portrayed on his Damascus issues. The question naturally arises whether we can rely on the accuracy of the Roman artist, for it is doubtful that he ever saw Aretas III or knew what he looked like. Even if the artist depicted a characteristic Oriental type, the difference between the portrait of Aretas III, particularly his long hair, and that of Aristobolus is interesting.

IV. THE COINS OF OBODAS II, 62—60 B.C.E.

An inscription found in Petra[51] mentions this Obodas, to whom it refers as the king and as the son of Aretas:

line 3: ... על חיי עבדת מלך

line 4: נבטו בר חרתת מלך נבטו שנת 1

(... for the life of Obodas, king of the Nabataeans, the son of Aretas, king of the Nabataeans. Year 1)

This is the earliest Nabataean inscription with a clear date,[52] that of 62 B.C.E. This date also appears on a coin. There are two other dated coins, and these three together (below, p. 87), provide us with references to all the three years covered, in part, by the reign of Obodas II.

The historical sources make no mention of Obodas II, but from the above inscription, and from the coins, we can deduce that his rule extended at most over three years. The inscription attests the existence, after Aretas, of a king named Obodas, undoubtedly

[49] See E.A. Sydenham: *The Coinage of the Roman Republic*, London, 1952, p. 152, Nos. 913, 914.

[50] *Ibid.*, p. 156, No. 923; and see Pl. VII, f., below.

[51] G. Dalman: *Neue Petra-Forschungen*, Leipzig, 1912, p. 99, No. 90.

[52] It is not at all certain whether another inscription, attributed to the days of Aretas III, should not be assigned to the reign of Aretas IV, even though it mentions Rabbel I. On this, see Cantineau, *op. cit.* (above, n. 4), II, pp. 1–2. Obodas II is also mentioned in an inscription of the days of Aretas IV which refers to a statue of עבדת אלהא (the god Obodas), Obodas having been posthumously deified: see Cooke, *op. cit.* (above, n. 8), p. 244, No. 95.

Obodas the son of Aretas III. According to the sources, Aretas III ruled at least until the beginning of 62 B.C.E., the year in which he capitulated to Scaurus, while Malichus I began to reign apparently in 60 B.C.E. (see below, p. 20). Obodas II accordingly reigned between Aretas III and Malichus I, for about two years in all.

We have been able to trace only six of the coins of Obodas II; these are extremely rare. Despite the great similarity between them and the coins of Obodas III, we can distinguish between the two groups without difficulty (see coins Nos. 9, 10, 11, 11A).

From the days of Obodas III onwards, the majority of Nabataean coins bear the portraits of both the king and the queen, a feature we would designate as dominant in the later Nabataean issues.

On the coins which belong to the period before Obodas III and of which the identity is certain, such as those of Aretas III and especially those of Malichus I, only the king's head is depicted, We are inclined to assume that the Obodas coins without the queen's head are early and belong to Obodas II. Their style, too, differs from the Obodas coins bearing the portraits of both the king and queen, which makes it difficult to maintain that both groups were minted at the same time, even though they bear the identical dates of שנת תרתין, שנת תלת. (year two, year three).

Dussaud,[53] noting the basic difference between the way Obodas' hair is shown on the two groups of coins, contended that Obodas II's hair was short, whereas Obodas III's was long. But this evidence is inconclusive, for Dussaud did not see all the relevant coins. In a coin of Obodas II in the University of Newcastle, England, for example (No. 11A), the king's hair is definitely long and hangs down to the nape of his neck. In fact, this is one way of distinguishing between the coins of Obodas II's first year and of his second year, on which he is depicted with relatively short hair (Nos. 9, 10) and those of his third year (Nos. 11, 11A), on which his hair is long. Furthermore, on coins of his second year his ear is uncovered, but on those of his third year it is covered.

Obodas II, his bust draped, appears on his coins as an elderly, perhaps even an old, man, his advanced age emphasized by the generally younger appearance of his successors.

The group of coins attributed by us to Obodas II is distinguished from those of Obodas III by another important feature. Whereas coins of Obodas III, like those of Malichus I and Aretas IV, have in their field the letter ח and the mark ○ (for a discussion of them, see below, p. 27), these are lacking on the coins of Obodas II. This serves to emphasize further the difference between this group and that on which the queen is also depicted.

The transition from the Hellenistic period, in which the Nabataeans were under Seleucid or Ptolemaic influence, to the Roman period, which followed the conquest by Pompey in 63 B.C.E., was expressed in Nabataean coinage by a sharp transition from issues with a Hellenistic character and Greek inscriptions to those with inscriptions in Nabataean.

Thus for the first time in the history of numismatics, coins indisputably 'Nabataean', by reason of their Nabataean inscriptions, made their appearance. All that had been hitherto struck by the Nabataeans were either without inscriptions or had Greek inscriptions.

Although these coins are truly 'Nabataean', they nevertheless bear the character of imitations. Made of silver, they resemble the principal contemporary silver issues of the Near East. In contrast to the coins of Aretas III, which were in fact 'city' coins and hence struck in bronze (with the exception of the unique coin No. 15 issued under the influence of the Seleucid state minting), Obodas II's minting was 'state' and in silver only. The denomination preferred by Obodas II was the half-shekel (except for one quarter-shekel

53 Dussaud, *op. cit.* (above, n. 17), p. 209.

coin minted in the first year, No. 9). During this period the main coins in the commerce of the Near East were the Tyrian shekel and half-shekel,[54] and from their first appearance in 125 B.C.E. until they ceased to be minted in 55 C.E.[55] they were the principal currency represented in most of the hoards of silver coins found in Palestine and in Syria. It is therefore not surprising that the Nabataean coins should have imitated the Tyrian shekel.[56] Our view, which differs from the opinion of our predecessors, who held that this type of Obodas II coin was an imitation of the Ptolemaic coins, is based on the fact that the Tyrian shekels almost completely supplanted the Ptolemaic tetradrachms in the region.

The silver content of the coins of Obodas II is high. We have been able to examine only three of his coins, two of which have a silver content of 96% (higher than that of the Tyrian shekels) and the third 87% (a little less than the Tyrian shekels); the latter is, however, in a poor state of preservation and covered with an incrustation which affects its quality. These coins are nevertheless sufficient to show that the silver content of the coins of Obodas II is high. The weight of the coins of the half-shekel denomination is as follows:

1)	6.78 gr.	4)	6.49 gr.
2)	6.76 "	5)	6.25 "
3)	6.68 "	[6)	6.72 " (= 2 × coin No. 9)].

The average weight is 6.61 gr. The weight of the quarter-shekel (coin No. 9) is 3.36 gr. giving a half-shekel of 6.72 gr., which is identical to the average weight of the contemporary Tyrian half-shekel. Of the above six coins, four weigh more, and only two less, than the average.[57]

The Significance of Obodas II's Minting

We venture to suggest that the minting under Obodas II was not intended to meet the needs of commerce, for which there was an abundance of Tyrian shekels (besides the Seleucid and Ptolemaic coins). This is the impression we gain from the fact that there are strikingly few coins of Obodas II, suggesting that their minting had mainly political significance. It was probably meant to raise the prestige of the king and also that of the Nabataean royal house as a whole among its subjects, in view of the fact that the country had only recently been subjugated by the Romans. The issuance of these distinctly Nabataean coins immediately after the Roman domination implies a connection between the two events, apparently indicating the liberal attitude of the Romans towards vassal kings, at least those in the frontier region. That there were very few of these coins in commercial circulation can be inferred from the fact that the only two coins of שנת תרתין (year two) have a common die, and that two of the three coins of שנת תלת (year three) have two pairs of dies in common.

The Design of the Eagle

As mentioned previously, the coins of Obodas II imitated the Tyrian shekels, and hence there is no reason to dwell on the significance of the eagle which appears on them in precisely the same way as it does on the Tyrian shekels. Yet the fact should not be

54 See Hill, *op. cit.* (above, n. 23), pp. 233–253, Nos. 44–245; and see Pl. VII, g., below, for a reproduction of a Tyrian half-shekel.

55 This year is the last clearly-mentioned date on the shekels. Later dates assigned to this issue, e.g., Hill, *ibid.*, p. 253, Nos. 244, 245, belong to a barbaric group, on which the reading of the dates is not at all clear. From 55 C.E. onwards Roman provincial tetradrachms of Nero, struck in Antioch, replaced the Tyrian shekels; see W. Wruck: *Die syrische Provinzialprägung von Augustus bis Traian*, Stuttgart, 1931, pp. 181–184.

56 As the Tyrian shekel itself is an imitation of the earlier Seleucid tetradrachms struck in Tyre.

57 The average weight of the Tyrian half-shekel was taken from 22 coins, dated 126–12 B.C.E., in the British Museum. Later, the weight of the Tyrian half-shekel was reduced.

overlooked that this figure occurred frequently in Nabataean art; several sculptures depicting an eagle were found in Nabataean ruins. Particularly noteworthy in this respect are the finds at Khirbet Tannûr and Ẓaharet el-Bedd.[58]

The prevalence of the eagle among the Nabataeans and its special significance in their culture and religion presumably facilitated the adoption of the form and design of the Tyrian shekel. No other design occurs on the coins of Obodas II.

The Inscriptions

The inscriptions on the coins appeared for the first time in Nabataean (Aramaic) letters. They are:

1. עבדת מלכא מלך נבטו / ש 1
   (Obodas the king, king of the Nabataeans / Y[ear] 1)
2. עבדת מלכא מלך נבטו / שנת תרתין
   (Obodas the king, king of the Nabataeans / Year two)
3. עבדת מלכא מלך נבטו / שנת תלת
   (Obodas the king, king of the Nabataeans / Year three)
   On coin No. 11 the inscription is defective:
4. עבדת מלכ מלך נבטו / שנת תלת
   (Obodas [the] king, king of the Nabataeans / Year three)

The absence of the letter א in the word מלכ on coin No. 11 is probably unintentional, the result of the artist's miscalculation of the available space.

The Dates

The three years that fell during the king's reign are all mentioned on coins, the first year being indicated by the numeral 1 on a quarter-shekel, the second by תרתין, and the third by תלת. If the Nabataean kings' regnal years were according to the lunar year, those of Obodas II may be dated as follows:

Year one (1) corresponded to part of 62 B.C.E. and the beginning of 61 B.C.E.;

Year two (תרתין) to the rest of 61 B.C.E. and the beginning of 60 B.C.E.;

Year three (תלת) to the latter part of 60 B.C.E.

Since Aretas III reigned during part of 62 B.C.E. and Malichus I during part of 60 B.C.E. (see below, p. 20), Obodas II apparently ruled for no more than a total of two years spread over part of 62, the whole of 61, and part of 60 B.C.E.

The Letters[59]

The Aramaic letters which occur on the coins of Obodas II are the first in Nabataean numismatics, and among the earliest in Nabataean epigraphy as a whole. These letters have a certain archaic character: they are generally 'square' and angular, the lines tend to be straight and firm, and the writing is largely calligraphic and reminiscent of stone engraving. By contrast, towards the end of the Nabataean period the letters become more cursive and less firm, as can be seen from the Table of Letters (see below, p. 83).

Particularly characteristic of the inscriptions on the coins of Obodas II are the letters א, ט, מ, ע which have an ancient quality about them. That the letters on the coins of Obodas II differ in some respects from those on the coins of Obodas III is an additional argument in favour of differentiating between them. (For a detailed, comparative discussion of the Nabataean letters, see below, pp. 62–63.)

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[58] See Nelson Glueck: Explorations in Eastern Palestine, IV, *AASOR* XXV–XXVIII (1945–1949), Part I, pp. 204–207, 209, Figs. 74–76, 78, 79.

[59] We have not made a detailed comparison between the letters in the numismatic and in the non-numismatic Nabataean inscriptions, because their respective characters and techniques, differing as they do from one another, could have led to differences that are not necessarily of an internal nature attesting the style of a period and so on. See Cooke, *op. cit.* (above, n. 8), Pl. XIV, for the table of the Nabataean alphabet used in Nabataean inscriptions.

The Mint

The site of Aretas III's mint is known definitely to have been in Damascus. In contrast, the location of Obodas II's mint, in the absence of any decisive evidence, can only be conjectured. There is no doubt that the Nabataean mint ceased to be in Damascus and had to be re-located elsewhere. When Aretas III lost Damascus, he moved to Petra, which may have been his main place of residence even before. There he fortified himself against the Romans and was besieged by Scaurus. Already then Petra was the Nabataean capital, chosen not only because it was the geographical centre of Nabataea, but also because of its tactical advantage as a naturally fortified city. Being the political and military centre of the country, Petra was presumably also selected as the site of the mint. In the following chapters we shall see that the coins of other Nabataean kings have a mint-mark, which refers apparently to Petra. Since the technique used in striking the coins of Obodas II is identical with that of the coins of Malichus I and Obodas III — about which more data are available to indicate that they were struck in Petra (see below, pp. 27–28) — weare inclined to assign the minting of the coins of Obodas II to Petra as well. In any event, we know of no other Nabataean place which had a better claim to be chosen as the site of the mint.

V. THE COINS OF MALICHUS I, 60 — 30 B. C. E.

In the historical sources Malichus I is mentioned only from the end of the fourth decade of the first century B.C.E.[60] Nothing is known of the early period of his reign. It is solely on the basis of the chronology of his predecessor, of his successor, and of his coins that it is possible to establish the first year of his reign as 60 B.C.E.

Josephus,[61] in describing the struggle between Antigonus the Hasmonaean and Herod, states that the latter went to 'Malchus the Arab king,' who had earlier received many benefits from him. Herod, being more than ever in need of help, now hoped to receive, in return for these past favours, either a loan or a gift of money. Herod was informed by messengers from Malichus, however, that, for fear of the Parthians, who were opposed to any help being given to him, he was not to come to the Nabataean king. Josephus adds that this refusal to help Herod was a pretext which sprang from Malichus' reluctance to repay his debts to him. Despairing of obtaining any assistance from the Nabataeans, Herod proceeded to Egypt. In the meantime Malichus regretted having refused to help Herod and even hurried after him, but failed to catch up with him.

After he had defeated Antigonus (37 B.C.E.) and consolidated his position in Judaea, Herod was free to settle accounts with Malichus. The two armies met at Dion and after a bitter fight Herod gained the upper hand.[62] Near Kana, Malichus regrouped his army, which Herod would have routed a second time had not Athenion, one of Cleo-

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60 An inscription which was found in Moab and which mentions מלכו may, due to the somewhat archaic character of the letters, be of the days of Malichus I. If the attribution to him is correct, the inscription would be of his eleventh year, that is, 50 B.C.E., and thus would be the earliest mention of him.

61 AJ XIV, 370–375.

62 *Ibid.*, XV, pp. 110–120. The battle of Kana is described in §112. According to A. Schalit: *King Herod: Portrait of a Ruler*, Jerusalem, 1962, p. 71 (Hebrew), these events occurred in 32 B.C.E., shortly before the earthquake of 31 B.C.E. We suggest that the army may have been already mobilized in 34 B.C.E or even 35 B.C.E.

patra's generals, come to Malichus' aid and defeated Herod's soldiers, weary from fighting the Nabataeans. The remnants of the Nabataean force completed the work initiated by Cleopatra's men against Herod's army. After this reversal Herod changed his tactics and engaged in guerilla warfare against Malichus I.

All the bronze coins of Malichus I were, it seems, struck during this limited period of ferocious wars against Herod. The clear dates 'year 27' (coins Nos. 13–17) and 'year 28' (coins Nos. 18 and 19), corresponding to 34 and 33 B.C.E., apparently refer to this period, when Malichus I needed money to pay his soldiers. The mobilization of the Nabataean army (of mercenaries?), whose activities during most of Malichus' reign (60–35 B.C.E.) are unknown, put him for the first time in the position of needing coins urgently. This was apparently the reason for their appearance in these years and for their absence during the earlier period of his rule.

The Bronze Coins (No. 13–19)

The bronze coins have distinct dates, in contrast to the type of silver coin (see below) on which the reading of the date is not quite clear. As previously mentioned (p. 17), the coins of Obodas II were of silver only, so that the bronze coins of Malichus I were the first in the history of pure Nabataean minting, that is, of coins bearing Nabataean inscriptions.

There are two groups of coins which bear the name of Malichus, one belonging to Malichus II. We must therefore determine the basic differences between the groups, so as to justify attributing the present one to Malichus I. The distinguishing features of the two groups are as follows:

a) There are two distinctly different groups of portraits, which obviously refer to two entirely different kings. We shall deal in greater detail with this later.

b) There are dates on all the bronze coins bearing the portrait of, in our view, Malichus I, but there are none on the bronze coins of Malichus II.

c) The queen is always depicted on the coins of Malichus II (except for a unique tiny coin, No. 141) but not on those of Malichus I.

d) The style of the letters on the two groups is entirely different (see the Table of Letters, Pl. 83). On the coins of Malichus I the letters have an ancient character, and bear a close resemblance to those on the coins of Obodas II.

e) The denominations of both the silver and the bronze coins in one group are completely different from those in the other.

f) The artistic style of the two groups is conspicuously different.

One of the first Nabataean coins to be studied by scholars was coin No. 18, published originally by de Luynes[63] who, although misreading מלכא (the king) as מלכו (Malichus) nevertheless correctly attributed the coin to Malichus, the contemporary, according to him, of Alexander Balas. Between the appearance of de Luynes' article in 1858, and of Hill's catalogue in 1922, with its similarly correct attribution of the coin, all other scholars of Nabataean numismatics attributed it to Aretas IV for two reasons: first, the absence of the king's name on the only specimen then available (in the National Library, Paris) and, secondly, an error in the reading of the date. Because the numeral 𐡅 (= 5) on this specimen looks very much like the numeral 𐡃 (= 20), the date was read as 𐡃𐡃𐡅 = year 43, that is, the forty-third regnal year. Since the only king who reigned for such a lengthy period was Aretas IV and since the name of the king is not preserved on the coin, it was natural to attribute it to Aretas IV. Hill[64] showed, however, that the date is actually 𐡃𐡃𐡄, that is, 28 and not 43, and hence the coin was not necessarily ascribable to Aretas. Hill also stated that, since the head of the king on the coin greatly resembled that on the

63 de Luynes, *op. cit.* (above, n. 10), p. 293, No. 1.

64 Hill, *op. cit.* (above, n. 19), p. xiv.

silver coin of Malichus I, it was to be attributed to him. Now that other coins with a clear reading have become available, we can only express admiration of Hill's keen insight and brilliant reconstruction.

Coins Nos. 13–17 are dated 'year 27' and coins Nos. 18 and 19 'year 28'. It is quite clear that the large coins (Nos. 13 and 18), the medium ones (Nos. 14, 15 and 16), and the small ones (Nos. 17 and 19) are a set of three denominations, representing a 'whole,' a 'half,' and a 'quarter,' respectively. The weight of the large type is about 10 gr., of the medium one 5.66 gr., and of the small one about 2.50 gr. What the precise division was we do not know, just as we do not know the relationship between them and the silver coins, or what they were called.

The fact that all the bronze coins bear the dates of either year 27 or year 28 lends probability to the suggestion that they were 'emergency coins,' minted in order to meet the needs of war. Not only does this explain their appearance in these particular years, but also it helps to date with a great deal of certainty Josephus' account of the war between Herod and Malichus I to 34–32 B.C.E., these being the years when the main battles between the two were fought.

The Silver Coin (No. 12)

One of the most problematic of Nabataean issues is a silver coin of Malichus I, which is a unique specimen.

The portrait is clear, the inscriptions are easy to read, and everything seems straightforward, except for one thing: on the reverse of the coin in the field right there are the symbols IKΕ. At first sight these seem to be three usual Greek letters, except that they form no intelligible combination. The principal attempts at interpreting them have rightly centred around reading them as a date, since this is where the date occurs on all other Nabataean coins of this denomination. If we read from right to left, the symbol Ε is 200 and K 20, making 220. But what is the meaning of the last symbol I, which should also be a Greek letter and which should accordingly signify 10? Yet how can a date be written in the form of 220 + 10? If the intention was to indicate the year 230, it should have been written ΛΕ If, however, this last symbol is not Greek but Nabataean and stands for the numeral 1, what significance does the Nabataean numeral 1 have alongside the Greek numerals 220? Nor can the symbols ΚΕ be read as Nabataean. Dussaud,[65] although realizing the many difficulties inherent in his suggestion, read the inscription as the initial letters of some Greek expression, such as *I*[*EPAC*] *K*[*AI*] [*A*]*C*][*YΛ OY*]or *I*[*EPAC*] *K*[*OIΛHC*] *C*[*YPIAC*] a reconstruction which is not particularly convincing, especially since there is no specific reason why either of these expressions should appear on a Nabataean coin. Not only is this form of abbreviation improbable, but no analogous examples occur on other coins.

Hill,[66] rejecting Dussaud's suggestion, maintained that these symbols represent a date, as one would expect from a comparison with other Nabataean coins of the same denomination. He therefore suggested that the symbol stands for *E*[*TOVC*] and that the letters *IK* represent either the year 30 — i.e., K + I = 20 + 10, in accordance with the Nabataean way of writing the numeral 30 as which is 20 + 10 — or the year 21. But this explanation is also unconvincing, for the symbol bears no resemblance to E, besides which its position on the right and not on the left is strange and improbable.

None of the readings proposed brings us any nearer a solution of the problem. As suggested by Hill, the combination *IK* , placed where it is on the coin, represents a date. Our reading of this combination has been influenced by the additional information we have about the dates on the other coins of Malichus I and the reason for minting them.

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65 Dussaud, *op. cit.* (above, n. 17), p. 211.

66 Hill, *op. cit.* (above, n. 19), p. xiii.

The fact that these were struck in the twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth years of his reign may hint at the date on the silver coin. We would therefore make the following suggestion.

The date is the year 26, which is our reading of the combination KE, the letter E being very similar to the Greek letter then used for the numeral 6.[67] But we would have expected the symbol L to occur on the left of the date, and the whole combination LK would then clearly stand for 'year 26'. This, in our view, is actually the symbol which should be read here and which, because of a minor, not unusual mistake, was written only partially as I instead of fully, as L. How did this mistake occur?

To engrave the letters and the designs on the dies of the ancient coins a two-stage technique was used. In the first stage holes were bored to mark the extremities of the letters or of the design. Thus, for example, to engrave the letter M on a die, five holes were first bored, like this. . Only at a later stage were the holes connected by channels, and not necessarily by the same artist, as follows: . In most inscriptions on ancient coins traces of the holes at the extremities of the letters are still discernible. Intended to facilitate the cutting of the channels to the shape of the letters and to prevent them from extending beyond their proper limits, this technique led to many mistakes, since the one who cut the channels did not always understand the intention of the one who had bored the holes.[68] There are instances in which the holes were not joined by channels, so that we find inscriptions consisting of holes only, as happened on several coins of Alexander Jannaeus.[69]

To reconstruct the process of engraving the inscription on the die of the coin under discussion, we shall first give only the pattern of the holes, still clearly visible, which were bored into it,[70] as follows: . An interesting fact which emerges is that there is an additional hole under the letter K, which actually looks like this: . There is no justification for this additional hole; it seems to be superfluous and illogical in that position. It was certainly not meant to mark the point at which the oblique lines of the letter K join the vertical line, for once this vertical line has been engraved, there is no need of such a hole. The only feasible explanation is that this hole does not belong to the letter K and that the one who engraved the channels mistakenly extended the vertical line as far as this bottom point, which actually belongs to the symbol to the left of the K, so that the inscription should have been engraved like this: There are many instances in which the symbol extends below the letters of the date, exactly as we have suggested.[71]

This coin is thus of Malichus I's twenty-sixth year and hence was struck in 35 B.C.E., only one year, it is interesting to note, before the bronze coins. Undoubtedly this coin belongs to the group of 'emergency coins' issued as a result of Malichus' wars against Herod. Thus it apparently dates the actual beginnings of those battles to 35 B.C.E. (see Table A).

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67 See, for example, the writing of the date 96 (ϥϛ) on the Tyrian shekels struck in 31 B.C.E., the twenty-ninth year of Malichus I.

68 See, for example, the way of writing the letter Z, the points of which are and which was wrongly engraved as : see Hill, *op. cit.* (above, n. 24), p. 259, Nos. 74–77, Pl. XXIX, 7.

69 There are several examples of this in the Kadman Numismatic Museum, Tel Aviv, and in private collections in Jerusalem.

70 While the holes were bored in the die in the reverse order, that is, from left to right, so that the inscription should appear on the coin in the correct order, we refer to the inscription and to the holes as they are on the coin and not on the die.

71 In the British Museum there are several Tyrian shekels (see Hill, *op. cit* [above, n. 23], Nos. 54, 59 [not illustrated]) on which there is a somewhat similar feature: the lower stroke of the L is missing, so that the letter looks like this .

Table A

The Chronology of the Coins of Malichus I

	Coin			Date		Reference
	Silver	*Bronze*	*Date on Coin*	*Its Reading*	*Year B.C.E.*	*No. in Catalogue*
1.	*O* Head of king *R* Eagle		LKE	Year 26	35/34	12
2.		*O* Head of king *R* Cornucopiae	7 20 שנת	Year 27	34/33	13
3.		*O* Head of king *R* Eagle	27 שנת	Year 27	34/33	14
4.		*O* Head of king *R* Eagle	7 20ש	Y(ear) 27	34/33	15
5.		*O* Head of king *R* Eagle	27 ש	(Year) 27	34/33	16
6.		*O* Head of king *R* Palm of hand	7 20ש	Y(ear) 27	34/33	17
7.		*O* Head of king *R* Palm of hand	27 ש	Y(ear) 27	34/33	17A
8.		*O* Head of king *R* Cornucopiae	28 שנת	Year 28	33/32	18
9.		*O* Head of king *R* Palm of hand	8 20[ש]	[Y](ear) 28	33/32	19

Legend: *O* = Obverse; *R* = Reverse.

Malichus I's Portrait

Malichus I's distinctive features and the particular way his hair is dressed make it easy to distinguish him from the other Nabataean kings.

His face is depicted as that of a young man and his hair hangs down in long, distinct ringlets, a style found among none of the other Nabataean kings. Another notable feature is that the ringlets fall down in more or less straight lines, unlike the hair of his successors, which fall in oblique, wavy lines. Yet another basic difference between the portrait of Malichus I and that of Malichus II can be seen on the clear coins of the former. These show the head only, whereas the coins of the latter depict the king's bust.

Designs

At this point in the history of Nabataean minting it is possible to speak of Nabataean symbols.

a) The Eagle (Coins Nos. 12, 14, 15, 16)

It was on the coins of Obodas II that we previously came across the eagle, which imitated that on the Tyrian shekels and undoubtedly had a religious significance for the Nabataeans because of its prevalence in Nabataean art as a whole. In the issues of Malichus I this design was transferred to the bronze coins, and accordingly became an independent design, unconnected with the original types from which it was taken. By now the eagle on the coins may already have been regarded as

having a specifically Nabataean religious significance.[72]

b) The Cornucopiae (Coins Nos. 13, 18)

Of Greek origin and introduced into the East by the Hellenistic culture, cornucopiae were widely used as a motif in all the syncretistic Hellenistic cults and occur very frequently on Seleucid and Ptolemaic coins. Due apparently to this influence it came to be used also on the coins of other eastern peoples, such as the Jews[73] and the Nabataeans.

It is difficult to determine whether, in addition to their usual Hellenistic meaning as a symbol of fertility and plenty, the cornucopiae had some special Nabataean meaning. As the characteristic symbol of Demeter, of other goddesses such as Tyche, and of the various Hellenistic Astartes, the cornucopiae may for the Nabataeans have symbolized Atargatis. On the Damascus coins of Aretas III the cornucopiae are held by Tyche of Damascus, but there they undoubtedly have no Nabataean significance. We shall see that henceforth, and especially from the days of Aretas IV onwards, the cornucopiae became the dominant design on the Nabataean bronze coins.

Just as the cornucopiae on the Jewish coins undoubtedly had a symbolic meaning for the Jews, since they occur on such a large number of the coins of the Hasmonaeans, they doubtless have a distinctly Nabataean meaning on the Nabataean coins. On these the details of the cornucopiae resemble those familiar in the Hellenistic world: from the horn, filleted and filled to overflowing with bunches of grapes, other fruit, apparently pomegranates and ears of corn, burst forth.[74]

c) The Palm of a Hand (Coins Nos. 17, 19)

While the eagle and the cornucopiae were common and usual designs throughout the Hellenistic world, the design of the palm of a hand was a novelty in numismatics in general. It is in fact the first and almost the only exclusively Nabatataean design in Nabataean numismatics. The extended palm of the raised hand had a distinctly religious and ceremonial significance in the life of the Nabataeans. This is not an isolated instance but is known also from the days of Obodas III and Aretas IV. The figure of a woman (the queen?) appears on the coins of Obodas III (Nos. 31, 35–37, 39); she stands and raises her right hand as though in a salute with the palm of the hand extended and the fingers slightly parted. Its position on these coins is identical with that on the coins of Malichus I. The name Shuqailat occurs on a coin of Aretas IV (No. 97) alongside the figure of the woman raising her hand. Thus we have the queen depicted there.

While the raised palm of the hand was not unknown in the ancient world, especially in the East, it would be wrong to compare different cultures and periods. The closest comparison, and also, so it seems to us, the only legitimate one in the present case, is with the palm of a hand depicted on the tessera which was found in Palmyra, the date of which is close to that of our coin.[75] The palm depicted on this tessera is completely identical with that on the coin of Malichus I. A connection between these two is suggested by the similarity of their cultural background as well as by their chronological and geographical proximity.

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72 It is not quite clear which deity is to be identified with the eagle, whether Dusares, or Baʿal-shamem, or Atargatis. Archaeological finds show the eagle by itself or with a serpent, but nothing resembling it has been found accompanying any known god.

73 The design of the cornucopiae occurs on coins of all the Hasmonaean rulers and on those of the Herodian dynasty too: see Meshorer, *op. cit.* (above, n. 22), Pls. II–V, VII, VIII, XIII–XV, XVII, XVIII.

74 Cf., for example, the cornucopiae of Malichus I with those on the gold coins of Ptolemy II: see Poole, *op. cit.* (above, n. 29), Pl. VIII.

75 See N. Ingholt, H. Seyrig, and J. Starcky: *Recueil des tessères de Palmyre*, Paris, 1955, No. 444. In this work the significance of the palm is not discussed. However Comte du Mesnil du Buisson, in *Les tessères*

The Inscription on the Silver Coin (No. 12)

The inscription on the silver coin reads as follows:

מלכו מלכא מלך נבטו (Malichus the king, king of the Nabataeans); in field, ח ס אנכ

The way the inscription is set out on this coin is somewhat strange and differs from that on the other known Nabataean coins. Beginning at the top left, the first half of the inscription (מלכו מלכא) continues downwards, with the feet of the letters turned towards the centre of the coin, while the second half of the inscription (מלך נבטו) begins at the top right and continues downwards with the feet of the letters turned towards the edge of the coin. Diagrammatically the inscription has this form: ⟅⟆ contrary to the usual form of ⟅⟆

The Inscriptions on the Bronze Coins (Nos. 13–19)

(All these inscriptions begin at the top left and end at the top right.)

1. Coin No. 13:
   מלכו מלכא מלך נבטו (Malichus the king, king of the Nabataeans); in field, 7/20 שנת (year 27)
2. Coin No. 14:
   מלכו מלכא מלך [נבטו] (Malichus the king, king of [the Nabataeans]); in field, 27 שנת (year 27)
3. Coin No. 15:
   מלכו מלכא מלך נבטו (Malichus the king, king of the Nabataeans); in field, 7/20 ש (y[ear]) 27)
4. Coin No. 16:
   מלכו מלכא [מלך נבטו] (Malichus the king, [king of the Nabataeans]); in field, 27 ש (y[ear] 27)
5. Coin No. 17:
   מלכו מלכא מלך נבטו (Malichus the king, king of the Nabataeans); in field, 7/20 ש (y[ear] 27)
6. Coin No. 17A:
   מלכו מ[לכא מלך נבטו] (Malichus [the] k[ing, king of the Nabataeans]); in field, 27 ש (y[ear] 27)
7. Coin No. 18:
   מלכו מלכא מלך נבטו (Malichus the king, king of the Nabataeans); in field, 28 שנת (year 28)
8. Coin No. 19:
   מלכו מל[כא מלך נבטו] (Malichus [the] kin[g, king of the Nabataeans]); in field, 8/20 [ש] ([year] 28)

In all the inscriptions the king's name and title are the same and only the way of writing the date is different. On coin No. 13 the word שנת (year) and the numeral 20 are in the right field and the numeral 7 in the left field. On coins Nos. 14 and 18 the word שנת occurs in full in the right field and the date in the left, while on coins Nos. 15, 17 and 19 שנת is abbreviated to ש (reconstructed in the case of No. 19) with the numeral 20 alongside it and with the other numeral (7 in the case of Nos. 15 and 17; 8 in that of No. 19) in the left field. In two instances (Nos. 16 and 17A) the ש occurs by itself in the right field and the entire date (27) in the left field.

The feature common to all the coins is that the date is written in the *field* of the coin.

The Letters

The general character of the letters on the coins of Malichus I is still 'ancient'. They have the archaic form which disappeared from the days of Aretas IV onwards. In this respect they resemble generally those on the coins of Malichus I's predecessor Obodas II and his

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et les monnaies de Palmyre, Paris, 1962 — a work which is intended specifically to explain the meaning of the symbols in the tessera of Palmyra and which gives many examples and parallels (pp. 419–420) — comes to no definite conclusion, He believes that the palm of the hand may be associated with some deity, perhaps with Ba'al-shamem or Atargatis. While he also makes other suggestions, these two are plausible as far as the Nabataeans are concerned. H. Seyrig, in a personal communication on the question of the palm of the hand on Nabataean coins, has stated that he is unable to add anything on the subject.

successor Obodas III. Especially characteristic of the coins of Malichus I are the broad ט (which is higher and narrower on the later coins) and the letter 𐡀 or 𐡀 (that is, א) which is composed of two elements, a circular or semi-circular base and a short line joining it on the right; it differs from the later א, which comprises a unit and is rather reminiscent of the numeral 6. As can be seen from the Table of Letters (p. 81) there are several other letters which exhibit differences, but these are inessential.

The Letter and the Mark

The letter ח and the mark ○ (the latter an ordinary circle which is neither a Nabataean letter nor a Nabataean numeral) occurring in the fielld of a coin constitute an important and notabe element in the issues of Malichus I, as well as in those of his successors Obodas III and Aretas IV.

Appearing first on the coins of Malichus I and ending at a certain stage in the reign of Aretas IV, the letter and the mark, hitherto unexplained, have troubled us for a considerable time. They undoubtedly have some special significance in view of their occurrence for some fifty-five years, sometimes separately, sometimes together, and sometimes more than once on the same coin.

On coins of the ancient world there are various marks, single letters, monograms, as well as other signs and symbols in the field of the coin.[76] Some of these refer to the name and site of the mint.[77] On the basis of this prevailing custom we hope to be able to solve the problem of the letter and the mark under discussion.

The letter ח stands, it seems, for the name of the mint-master, of the Nabataean magistrate, or some such personage. That this letter did not change during the reign of Malichus I, Obodas III, and Aretas IV does not necessarily mean that it referred to the same person, for it could have stood for the hereditary family-name of the mint-masters, or, by sheer coincidence, all the mint-masters during these kings' reigns may have had names beginning with the letter ח. Perhaps in the course of time this letter came to be the special symbol of the mint-master. In the absence of more definite data we are inclined to favour this last supposition.

We associate the enigmatic mark ○, which occurs in no Nabataean context[78] other than on coins, with the site of the mint. We have previously suggested (p. 20) that Petra, the capital of the Nabataean kingdom, was the natural site for a mint,[79] and we should therefore expect to find some link between this mark and Petra. Indeed such a link exists. Petra was known to the Nabataeans as Reqem.[80] In Aramaic, Reqem means a stain, a spot, a (circular) piece of embroidery.[81] Although there are no specific instances in which the word Reqem means a circle, the connection between one and the other meanings of the word — a stain, a spot — points to a possible identity between the circle and the

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76 For similar features on Tyrian shekels, see, for example, Hill, *op. cit.* (above, n. 23), p. cxxxv.

77 Most cities had their own symbols or mint-marks which were struck on the coins. The symbols were generally associated with the characteristic cult of the city (such as the club of Heracles-Melqart on the coins of Tyre, or the dove of Aphrodite-Atargatis on the coins of Ascalon) or with the name of the city (such as the symbol of the pomegranate on the coins of Side in Pamphylia, which is the meaning of the city's name, or the palm-tree on the coins of Phoenicia-Tyre, or the symbol of the rose on the coins of Rhodes, and so on).

78 Comparing this circle with that on the staters of Tyre in the Persian period is irrelevant, as is also any other comparison. Such a circle does not occur in the period and region corresponding to those of the Nabataean coins.

79 This too is the view of Hill, *op. cit.* (above, n. 19), p. xxxvii. The earliest evidence relating to Petra as the capital of the Nabataeans occurs in Strabo, *op. cit.* (above, n. 2), 16, 4, 21.

80 See B. Maisler (Mazar): Reqem and Ḥeger *Tarbiz* 20 (1949) (Epstein Jubilee Volume), pp. 316–319.

81 See Targum Yerushalmi to Jer. 13:23; M. Jast-

name Reqem.[82] We would therefore suggest that the circle depicted on Nabataean coins is intended as the mint-mark, and derives from the meaning of the city's name.

The Silver Content

It is difficult to speak of statistics in connection with the silver content of the coins of Malichus I when only one silver coin of his, which we have examined, is known to exist.[83] It has a 91% silver content (a result obtained by specific gravity), which is identical with that of the Tyrian shekels. This high silver content is characteristic of all the Nabataean coins of the denomination of a half-shekel struck between 61 and 24 B.C.E. After that time the silver content begins to drop sharply. (See the Table of the Silver Content of Nabataean Coins, p. 72.)

VI. THE COINS OF OBODAS III, 30—9 B.C.E.

As a result of Josephus' detailed account of the conflict between the Nabataeans and the Jews in the days of Obodas III and Herod,[84] Obodas is the first Nabataean king about whom we have a relatively thorough historical knowledge. Josephus undoubtedly gleaned this information from the writings of Nicolaus of Damascus, who was well acquainted with the history of the Nabataeans, especially the period of Obodas III, having been obliged to study it in order to conduct the defence of Herod in the case between him and Obodas which was heard in Rome before the Emperor Augustus. Thus, an exhaustive historical account exists of a chapter, albeit a rather short one, in the history of the Nabataeans.[85]

Except on coins, there are no dated inscriptions of the days of Obodas III, whose name is mentioned, however, in an inscription on a statue of him erected by his son Aretas IV.[86]

The Numismatic Material

A. The Silver Coins. At a certain stage in the issues of Obodas III the denomination of silver coins was changed, a new departure in numismatics. The beginning of the reign of Obodas III was marked by the continuation of the traditional Nabataean minting of silver coins in the denomination of a half-shekel, and, except for the depiction of the queen's head on them, they are no different from the coins of Malichus I and Obodas II (Nos. 20, 21, 22, 23, 25). Such coins are known until Obodas III's seventh year (24 B.C.E.). Immediately afterwards a new, quite different series of silver coins made its appearance (Nos. 28, 29, 30, Sup 2, Sup 3, 32, 34, 38). These two groups of silver coins differ in four main characteristics:

1. *The Weight.* The average weight of the Nabataean 'half-shekels' is 6.63 gr. and their silver content is high (93.5% in a specimen in the British Museum); the coins of the new group weigh about 4.4 gr. and have a low

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row: *Dictionary*, s.v. רקם; Ludwig Koehler: *Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros*, Leiden, 1953, p. 909.

82 Prof. S. Morag, who was good enough to delve into this question, also thinks that it is semantically possible to connect the circle with Reqem.

83 The coin is in the British Museum and is the very one mentioned by Dussaud, *op. cit.* (above, n. 17), pp. 210–211. It was first published by de Saulcy, *op. cit.* (above, n. 15), Pl. I, No. 1, who gave a drawing of the coin with a ring attached on Pl. I, No. 1, and on pp. 32–33 an explanation of how he arrived at 6.80 gr. as the weight of the coin without the ring.

84 *AJ* XVI, 271–355.

85 For further details on the subject, see below, pp. 32–33.

86 He is also mentioned in the inscription of Syllaeus at Miletus: see M. de Vogüé, *JA* XI (1898), pp. 129 ff.; Cooke, *op. cit.* (above, n. 8), p. 244, No. 95.

average silver content, not more than 70% (obtained from examining four coins).[87]

2. *The Designs.* After Obodas III's seventh year the eagle no longer appears on the silver coins; it is replaced by the portrait of the king which now occurs twice on the same coin, alone on the reverse, and together with his wife, the queen, on the obverse.

3. *The Inscriptions.* Whereas the half-shekels have the king's full title in the form of עבדת מלכא מלך נבטו (Obodas the king, king of Nabataeans), the later coins, with one exception (No. 29), have only עבדת מלך נבטו (Obodas, king of the Nabataeans) or simple עבדת מלכא (Obodas the king).

4. *The Date.* On all the silver coins of the first group (except for No. 23) the date appears in the field of the coin, in words; on those of the later group it is a continuation of the inscription around and usually is shown in numerals, not in words. Thenceforth the date is written only in this way on all the silver coins and on all the bronze ones as well (except for No. 37).

While this last distinction is a purely technical one, the first three constitute significant differences, being related to a new monetary system, undoubtedly the result of historical developments in the Middle East at that time. Following the Roman domination of the East, far-reaching changes occurred in the Roman empire, necessitating the development of a more 'universal' financial policy, including supplying money for the whole empire.

This process was a gradual one that began in 31 B.C.E. (the battle of Actium) and was strengthened primarily in 27 B.C.E. (when the emperor received the title of Augustus) and in 23 B.C.E. (when Roman money had become the general medium of circulation in Asia Minor and in Egypt, as well as in other provinces in the West, such as Spain).[88]

The new group of Nabataean coins, minted from 23 B.C.E. onwards, has, as we have seen, an average weight of about 4.4 gr.,[89] which is incompatible with all of the contemporary monetary systems. It cannot be related to the weight of the earlier issues, since the new coin could serve no logical function in the system of the shekel, or to the later and lighter Seleucid drachms (which by then were hardly seen in the market), or to the Greek drachms of Lycia,[90] which may well have been unknown at the time to the populations of Syria, Judaea, and Nabataea.[91]

Nor does their weight conform to that of the Roman denarii, the average weight of which is 3.8 gr., which had by then begun to penetrate into the East.

Although the Nabataean coins are about 17% heavier than the Roman denarii, their silver content is 17% less. Accordingly, the absolute value of these Nabataean coins is very nearly the same as that of the Roman

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87 Hill, *op. cit.* (above, n. 19), p. xv. maintains that such coins (of the first group) dated in the first year of Obodas III have been found to exist, but he cites neither facts nor any reference in support of this statement. We have thus far been unable to find any such coin, and Hill's statement appears to be somewhat surprising and extremely improbable. The only reasonable explanation we can give is that he wrongly attributed coins of Aretas IV's first year (as yet unpublished at that time) to Obodas III.

88 For details of the process, see H. Mattingly: *Coins of the Roman Empire in the British Museum*, I, London, 1923, pp. xiii–xviii; M. Grant: *Roman Imperial Money*, London, 195 4,pp. 37–56, is inclined, however, to assign the latter stage to 19 B.C.E.; while C.H.V. Sutherland: *Coinage in Roman Imperial Policy 31 B.C.–A.D. 68*, London, 1951, p. 46, holds that the process took place in 23 or 20 B.C.E.

89 This weight, which was maintained under Obodas III and at the beginning of Aretas IV's reign, decreased from the end of the latter's days, especially under Malichus II and Rabbel II.

90 G.F. Hill, *BMC, Lycia, Pamphylia, and Pisidia*, London, 1897, p. 64, Nos. 8–18, Pl. XIII, 14–16.

91 We cannot understand why Dussaud, *op. cit.* (above, n. 17), p. 213, should have maintained that these new coins are of the denomination of a drachm, since their weight is, as we have stated, greater than that of the drachms, and, furthermore, since coins of the denomination of a drachm were then almost unknown in the region.

denarii. Why the Nabataeans should have found it necessary to increase the weight of these coins in comparison to the denarius without likewise increasing the value of the metal is not clear. It is as though they had increased the diameter of the coin merely to make it look more valuable.

Perhaps this enigma may be explained as follows: Obodas III, either for economic reasons or for motives of national prestige, was anxious to have a coinage of his own; thus he struck coins such as these, which he was prepared to exchange freely for Roman denarii, whose silver content was the same. The additional weight of the Nabataean coins apparently induced the Nabataeans to prefer them to the Roman denarii, since they were thicker and heavier and thus made a greater impression. Of course it was impossible in those days to gauge the silver content of the coins. We regard this issue as an attempt to introduce into the Nabataean market a substitute for the Roman coin. When, in the course of time, it became an accepted currency, the Nabataeans could permit themselves to reduce the weight of the coins.

These coins were called *sela'im* to distinguish them from the Roman denarii from which they differed markedly. Although unknown to us from the days of Obodas III, this designation is familiar from many inscriptions of the time of Aretas IV, in which they are called סלעין חרתי, the *sela'im* of Aretas.[92]

We believe that a change was made in the designs on the coins as a direct consequence of the changed denomination; perhaps it was introduced with the intention of emphasizing that innovation. With the Tyrian half-shekel no longer imitated, the eagle, too, disappeared from the new silver coins of Obodas III and was replaced by the king's head, depicted twice on the same coin. The reason for this curious duplication was difficult to comprehend: was it a desire to sever all connection with the usual designs on the 'pseudo-Tyrian' silver coins?

The Inner Chronology of the Coins of Obodas III

a) The Silver Coins. Only a few specimens are known of the first group of silver coins (of the half-shekel denomination), which is the rarest of Obodas III's issues. Coin No. 20 of the second year (29 B.C.E.) is unique. It should be pointed out that the reading of this date is not altogether certain, as the coin was struck twice and the inscription is not sharp. Nonetheless, the reading here of תרת[ין] (tw[o]) is still the most logical.[93]

Of the third year of Obodas' reign (28 B.C.E.) three coins are extant (No. 21), all of them from different obverse and reverse dies. We have determined the specific gravity of two of them; that of the coin in the British Museum is 10.38 (93.5% silver) and of the one in the Berlin Museum 10.22 (85% silver). The latter, on the analogy of the Tyrian shekels, still falls within the range of a normal silver content (of some Tyrian shekels).

No coins of Obodas' fourth year have been brought to light so far. Of the fifth year (26 B.C.E.) only one coin (No. 22), in the National Library, Paris, is known. For some reason it lacks the mark and letter which occur on the other coins, but this is probably a

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92 See, for example, an inscription from El-Ḥejra (*CIS* II, 198) which was written בירח טבת שנת תשע לחרתת מלך נבטו (in the month of Tevet, year nine of Aretas, king of the Nabataeans [1 C.E.]) and which declares that anyone making improper use of the tomb would be fined סלעין אלף חרתי (a thousand *sela'im* of Aretas).

93 The importance of this coin lies in an error made in its striking. Apparently another, previously struck coin of the same type remained attached to the die, which, when struck again on the flan of our coin, transferred to it the design (in the negative, naturally) of the reverse of the previous coin still attached to the die. When the minters realized the mistake that had been made, they removed the first coin from the die and restruck our coin. But traces of the mistake have been preserved, for the head of the eagle as well as part of the inscription (incused) is still visible where the queen's head should have been.

fortuitous circumstance with no special significance. Similar occurrences are known from coins of Aretas IV, among which the same coin also appears with both these features. Type 23 was struck next; it bears the date שנת שת (year six), a reading obtained with difficulty from this unique specimen. In contrast to the preceding coins, the date is a continuation of the inscription around. On the basis of the lower extremities of the letters, it is possible to reconstruct the inscription as שנת שת. The last coin of this group bears the date שנת שבע (year seven), and, unlike the earlier coins, has on its obverse only the king's head. With this, the minting of the silver coins of a half-shekel denomination came to an end.

A new series of silver coins of the denomination of a denarius begins with year 8, 23 B.C.E. (No. 28), of which only one specimen is known. So far no coin of the ninth year (22 B.C.E.) has been found, but of the tenth year three are known (Nos. 29, 30, 30A). Unfortunately we have been unable to examine coin No. 30 or to obtain either a cast or a photograph of it, and must therefore rely on the drawings and descriptions of Saulcy[94] and Dussaud.[95]

The next extant silver coin is of Obodas III's seventeenth year, 14 B.C.E. (No. 32), that is, after an interval of six years. Dussaud[96] described a coin of Obodas III's sixteenth year, now in the National Library, Paris, but upon examination it proved to have been struck with the dies of a coin of the eighteenth year (also in the National Library, Paris). Since part of the date is off the flan scholars could read only a portion of it — [II] ואח — but failed to supply the two missing units, which they could have done by comparing the dies.[97]

Of the eighteenth year three coins are extant, two of which are in Paris. The last known date of this series is '20 שנת', year 20 (No. 38), found on only two of the specimens.[98]

From Obodas III's seventeenth until his twenty-first, and last, year, these silver coins may have been struck continuously. If this is so, it is likely that coins of years nineteen and twenty-one, which are still missing, may yet be found.

Two more coins of Obodas III bearing dates were discovered after the completion of this work. This closes the gap between Obodas' tenth and seventeenth years, adding the fourteenth and sixteenth years to his minting on silver coins (see Sup 2 and Sup 3).

b) The Bronze Coins. The bronze coins of Obodas III are divided into two groups, the earlier and the later, which differ entirely from each other.

1. The earlier group. The earlier group is published here for the first time. Three types are known to us: the first (No. 24) is represented by only one specimen, the second (No. 26) by three, and the third (No. 27) by two specimens. The last can be assigned a definite date by combining the fragmentary inscription on a coin in the Kadman Numismatic Museum, Tel Aviv, with that on another in the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum, Jerusalem. The former has the reading עבדת מלכא מלך נבטו שנ... (Obodas the king, king of the Nabataeans. Yea . . .) and the latter שנת שבע (. . . year seven). These two coins have identical dies, and there is accordingly no doubt that the inscription has been correctly reconstructed. This bronze coin was therefore struck in 'year seven' of Obodas III's reign, in 24 B.C.E., the same year in which the second type (No. 26) was also struck. The first type (No. 24) is the earliest bronze issue of

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94 De Saulcy, *op. cit.* (above, n. 15), p. 19, No. 23.

95 Dussaud, *op. cit.* (above, n. 17), p. 213, No. 11.

96 *Ibid.*, p. 213, No. 12.

97 The study of the dies of coins is a comparatively young branch of numismatic research and was unicedpract in the nineteenth century.

98 The known number of coins of this group of Obodas III is much larger, but not all have the dates preserved on them.

Obodas III. Its denomination is the same as that of coin No. 19 of his predecessor Malichus I, and of the second type (No. 26) of Obodas III. The third type (No. 27), however, like coins Nos. 14, 15 and 16 of Malichus I, represents half the denomination.

As stated earlier, the coins of this group are extremely rare, having been struck in a limited quantity only, apparently for restricted circulation. They were issued at a time when the striking of silver coins in the denomination of a half-shekel had come to an end. Yet in character they still belong to that denomination, being in effect a continuation of the half-shekels of Obodas III's second, third, fifth, sixth, and seventh years. Together they constitute a single numismatic unit which ceased to exist in 24 B.C.E.[99]

There is really nothing new in the designs on these coins. An eagle is depicted on coin No. 27, as on the silver coins, but the date continues the inscription around and is not in the field of the coin. On coins Nos. 24 and 26 there are two crossed cornucopiae. Although this design, like the single cornucopiae on the coins of Malichus I, had an internal Nabataean significance, it was borrowed, as previously stated, from the Hellenistic repertoire of symbols. We shall see later that two cornucopiae became in the course of time the commonest, and finally almost the only, design on the Nabataean bronze coins.

On the obverse of these bronze coins of Obodas III there appear the heads of the king and the queen, as on his silver issues.

2. The later group. Very few of the bronze coins belonging to the later group appeared before Obodas III's seventeenth year (14 B.C.E.), and none were struck from his eighth to his twelfth year. The vast majority of them are dated to the last five years of his reign, that is, 14/13–10/9 B.C.E. These bronze coins, albeit extremely limited in number, were known to previous numismatists who, although unable to read their dates, assigned them to 30–9 B.C.E. Now that we have been able to examine some 50 such coins from many collections, it is clear that they were not struck before Obodas III's thirteenth year (18 B.C.E.) and derive mainly from his last year '21 שנת' (year 21), 10/9 B.C.E. On all of these bronze coins, except No. 36 and perhaps also No. 37, as well as on the silver coins of Obodas' seventeenth year, the king's title is given in abridged form: עבדת מלך נבטו (Obodas, king of the Nabataeans), without the word מלכא (the king), which appears on the earlier bronze coins. These coins, although almost unknown, are not at all rare, a fairly large number of them having been struck. That most of them were issued during a specific limited period undoubtedly has a special significance.

The years 14/13–10/9 B.C.E. were marked by many memorable events in the history of the Nabataean kingdom. Josephus[100] tells of a formidable war that broke out between the Nabataeans and the Jews during Obodas III's last years, in consequence of the events that occurred at Trachonitis after the Emperor Augustus had annexed the territory of Zenodorus to Herod's kingdom. Compelled to cease the acts of brigandage to which they were accustomed under Zenodorus' rule, the inhabitants of Trachonitis were forced to till the soil, an occupation which they disliked and did not find profitable.

When Herod sailed for Rome, the inhabitants of Trachonitis spread a report that he had died and reverted to their former life of brigandage. Attacked by Herod's men, they fled to Nabataea, where it was difficult to capture them. Herod himself, after his return from Rome, failed to take them prisoner, for they were well protected in the fortresses of the Nabataeans, who gave them every assistance. Because of the Nabataeans' open

[99] Josephus (*AJ*, XVI, 279) states that Herod lent Obodas 60 talents of silver. This attests a severe shortage of the metal on the part of the latter, but the precise time to which it refers is unknown.

[100] *Ibid.*, XVI, 271–292.

support of his enemies, Herod demanded of Obodas III the 60 talents of silver he had lent him (through Syllaeus) which were long overdue. This was the direct cause of a war between the Jews and the Nabataeans.

In a fierce and decisive battle the Nabataean general Nakebos was killed.[101] We assume that at this critical point Obodas III was compelled to recruit a considerable number of soldiers for his army, which in turn necessitated the issuing of coins to pay them. For the first time in the history of Nabataean minting, a comparatively large number of coins were struck. Their appearance in bronze in the seventeenth to the twenty-first year of Obodas III's reign, and concurrently in silver in his seventeenth to twentieth years, indicates that a large series in both metals was issued from 14/13 to 10/9 B.C.E. These were the very years that witnessed the struggle between the Nabataeans and the Jews.[102]

All the bronze coins of the later group show a woman (a goddess or a queen?) standing left and raising her right hand. This type became common also among the coins of Aretas IV (see p. 45 below; on the raised palm of the hand, see p. 25 above).

The Portraits

a) The King's Head. We have previously (p. 17) noted the principal differences between the protrait of Obodas II and that of Obodas III: the length of hair and the age of the face. Unlike the ringlets of his predecessor, Malichus I, which fall more or less straight down, those of Obodas III descend in oblique, wavy lines. His hair is tied on top with a fillet which is wider than that on the coins of his predecessors and which terminates in a knot, whose ends hang down at the back. On his coins struck from 30 to 23 B.C.E. Obodas III appears as a young man, and on those struck in 14–9 B.C.E. he appears as a mature, middle-aged man. The silver and bronze issues of the former date invariably have the king's bust, but the silver coins of the latter date have the king's head on both sides of the coin.

b) The Queen's Head. Here, for the first time in Nabataean minting, the queen's portrait appears on coins. It is depicted on the obverse of all the silver coins of Obodas III (except No. 25) alongside the portrait of the king, and on the obverse of three bronze coins.[103] As the queen's bust always appears behind that of the king and as a background to it, it is largely hidden. The earlier coins depict the draped busts of both the king and the queen, while the later group (of the eighth to the twenty-first year) show the king's head alongside the queen's bust. Because the queen's head is obscured, it is difficult to distinguish her hairdress, the shape of her ornaments, or the details of the object binding her hair, which may be a diadem or a wreath. On a coin in the Berlin Museum[104] (No. 21 BER) both a diadem and a wreath can be distinguished but not very clearly.

Although the queen's likeness appears on the coins of Obodas III, her name, curiously enough, is not mentioned at all. This omission may have some significance in the context of the developments which took place in the Nabataean royal house during the first century B.C.E. At the outset portraits of the queens were not struck on the kings' coins (as on those of Obodas II and Malichus I); nor are the queens mentioned in inscriptions or in historical sources. Apparently at this time the queen did not have the distinguished

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101 The corresponding Nabataean name of the Greek version is נקיבו: see *CIS* II, 2173, 2244, 2768.

102 A very common coin type of Herod (see Meshorer, *op. cit.* [above, n. 22], No. 53), of which thousands of examples are known, may have been struck precisely at this time, when Herod, too, was in need of money.

103 Among the other bronze coins the portrait of a woman occurs on Nos. 24, 26, 27; it is not impossible, although not certain, that it is the portrait of the queen. The figure of a woman is also depicted on other, later bronze coins of Obodas III, but her identity cannot be established.

104 Likewise on a coin in the Rosenberger collection, Jerusalem: see No. 32.

and honourable status she appears to have had at a later period. The higher standing enjoyed by the queen is apparently reflected in the coins of Obodas III, on which she is depicted alongside the king; her name, however, is still not mentioned.[105] As we shall see later, on the coins of Aretas IV and onwards the queen is depicted and her name is mentioned. One gains the impression that the queen's status in the hierarchy of the Nabataean royal house rose steadily over the years. This applied also to the queen-mother, who, even after the death of her husband, continued to rule as co-regent with her son the king (see p. 71 below).

The coins of Obodas III thus reflect an intermediate stage in the rising status of the queen in the Nabataean royal house.

The Symbols

a) The Eagle. The eagle was depicted on the silver and bronze coins of the first group only and occurred on the latter as a result of the influence of the former. It ceased to appear as a design when the minting of the coins of a half-shekel denomination came to an end. The fact that it was no longer depicted on the later coins of Obodas III may indicate that, as a Nabataean symbol, the eagle was important only for its association with the Tyrian shekels.

b) The Cornucopiae. While the design of the two cornucopiae appears frequently on the coins of Aretas IV, Malichus II, and Rabbel II, it first occurs on the rare type struck apparently in 24 and 23 B.C.E. (Nos. 24 and 26). As pointed out earlier (p. 25), the cornucopiae, the widespread symbol in the Hellenistic world of abundance and fertility, were adopted by various cultures and religions in the ancient East. In each instance the yun-doubtedly acquired some indigenous character and meaning. Thus, as suggested above (p. 25), the single cornucopiae may have been connected with Atargatis.[106]

c) The Standing Woman. The design of a standing woman is an entirely new one on Nabataean coins.[107] She is draped in a long garment, and around her waist wears a girdle, whose ends hang down at the sides; on her head is a veil. The woman raises her right hand with its palm extended (Nos. 31, 35, 36, 37, 39). As previously mentioned (p. 25), there is a clear connection between the extended palm of the hand on the coins of Malichus I (Nos. 17, 18) and the raised hand of this woman, whose identity was undoubtedly known to the Nabataeans. She may be the queen herself standing in a ceremonial posture connected with some Nabataean cult. There may even be some sort of blending of the queen and the goddess (Atargatis?). On a coin of Aretas IV (No. 97) is the figure of a woman, very similar to the one here; alongside her is the name of the queen Shuqailat, the wife of Aretas IV. If this inscription gives the identity of the woman depicted on it, the female on the coins under discussion here is also presumably the queen, whose portrait occurs on all the coins of the first group (except No. 25) and on the silver ones of the second group.

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105 Jugate busts of a king and queen are found mainly on coins of the Ptolemies and the Seleucids. Since no inscriptions from the days of Obodas III are extant (except for the incomplete one of Syllaeus at Milletus: see p. 37, below), we cannot tell if the queen's name was mentioned in them.

106 N. Glueck: *Deities and Dolphins*, New Yo-rk, 1965, pp. 410–412, holds that in Nabataean art the cornucopiae on the sculptures of the goddess Tyche, such as those found at Khirbet Tannur, are intended to emphasize her symbolic character as the Goddess of Fortune. Cornucopiae are also characteristic of Tyche when appearing in the form of winged Nike. Nor are the cornucopiae restricted to goddesses; they occur also with gods identified as Zeus-Jupiter or Dionysos-Dusares, likewise symbolizing 'givers of wealth.'

107 A standing woman already appears on coins of Aretas III, but she is either Tyche of Damascus or Nike, copied from the city coins of its former rulers and without any specific Nabataean significance. Nor does she bear any resemblance to the woman on the coins of Obodas III.

The absence of the queen's head on the bronze coins of the second group may indicate that it is, in fact, the queen who is depicted on the reverse of these coins. If this is so, she appears on every coin of Obodas III (except No. 25).

The Inscriptions

1) עבדת מלכא מלך נבטו (Obodas the king, king of the Nabataeans; Pl. 2 No. 20). This inscription appears on all the coins of Obodas III of the first group (silver and bronze) and on two coins of the later group (Nos. 29 and 36).

2) עבדת מלך מלך נבטו (Obodas [the] king, king of the Nabataeans; Pl. 2 No. 22). This inscription appears only on the silver coin of year five, No. 22. The form מלך instead of מלכא seems to be a mistake rather than to have any significance.

3) עבדת מלכא (Obodas the king). It is only on coins Nos. 28, 30 and 30A, of the eighth and tenth years of Obodas III's reign, that this inscription appears.

4) עבדת מלך נבטו (Obodas king of the Nabataeans; Pl. 3 No. 34). This inscription occurs on all the coins of Obodas III of the later group (silver and bronze), with the exception of Nos. 28, 29, 30, 36 and 37 (?).

5) שנת תרת[ין] (Year tw[o]). Silver (Pl. 2, No. 20); coin No. 20.

6) שנת תלת (Year three). Silver (Pl. 2, No. 21); coin No. 21.

7) שנת חמש (Year five). Silver (Pl. 2, No. 22); coin No. 22.

8) שנת שת (Year six). Silver and bronze (Pl. 2, No. 23); coins Nos. 23, 24.

9) שנת שבע (Year seven). Silver and bronze (Pl. 2, No. 25); coins Nos. 25, 26, 27.

10) שנת 8 (Year 8). Silver (Pl. 3, No. 28); coin No. 28.

11) שנת 10 (Year 10). Silver (Pl. 3, No. 29); coin No. 29.

12) שנת עשר (Year ten). Silver (Pl. 3, No. 30); coin No. 30.

13) שנת 13 (Year 13). Bronze (Pl. 3, No. 31); coin No. 31.

14) שנת 17 (Year 17). Silver and bronze (Pl. 3, No. 32); coins Nos. 32, 33.

15) שנת 18 (Year 18). Silver and bronze (Pl. 3, No. 34), coins Nos. 34, 35.

16) שנת 19 (Year 19). Bronze (Pl. 3, No. 36); coins Nos. 36, 37.

17) שנת 20 (Year 20). Silver (Pl. 3, No. 38);

18) שנת 21 (Year 21). Bronze (Pl. 3, No. 39); coin No. 39.

Marks and Letters

The mark O and the letter ח appear more conspicuously on the coins of Obodas III than on those of his predecessor Malichus I, where they first occur. We dealt with their significance when discussing the coins of the latter (see p. 27, above); there we suggested that the mark O, apparently denoting Reqem (= Petra), was the mint-mark of Petra, where the issues of Obodas III were undoubtedly also struck. These features occur on most of his coins, and sometimes on both sides of a coin. Only a few (Nos. 22, 24 and 30, and perhaps also Nos. 29, 33 and 36) do not have them, but this seems to be merely fortuitous, as is also the substitution of מלך for מלכא on coin No. 22. The mark and the letter occur in no fixed position, being on one occasion in the field right, on another in the field left. While the letter ח is sometimes interchanged with the mark O, the former is most often on the right and the latter on the left. The small silver coins (of the eighth, seventeenth, eighteenth and twentieth years) have only the letter ח without the mark O. Does this mean that they were struck somewhere else? And why should the letter ח appear twice on some of these coins? We are at a loss to understand the reason for all this.

Table B

Summary of the Coins of Obodas III

Coins		*B.C.E.*	*Date on Coin*	*Year with no Minting*
Silver	*Bronze*			
		30/29		first
Jugate heads & eagle		29/28	שנת תרתין (Year two)	
Jugate heads & eagle		28/27	שנת תלת (Year three)	
		27/26		fourth
Jugate heads & eagle		26/25	שנת חמש (Year five)	
Jugate heads & eagle	Jugate heads & two cornucopiae	25/24	שנת שת (Year six)	
One head & eagle	Jugate heads & two cornucopiae	24/23	שנת שבע (Year seven)	
	Jugate heads & eagle	23/22	8 שנת (Year 8)	
		22/21		ninth
Jugat eheads & head		21/20	10 שנת (Year 10)	
		20/19		eleventh
		19/18		twelfth
	Head & woman standing	18/17	13 שנת (Year 13)	
		17/16	14 שנת (Year 14)	
		16/15		fifteenth
		15/14	16 שנת (Year 16)	
Jugate heads & head	Head & woman standing	14/13	17 שנת (Year 17)	
Jugate heads & head	Head & woman standing	13/12	18 שנת (Year 18)	
Jugate heads & head	Head & woman standing	12/11	19 שנת (Year 19)	
Jugate heads & head		11/10	20 שנת (Year 20)	
	Head & woman standing	10/9	21 שנת (Year 21)	

VII. THE COINS OF SYLLAEUS, 9 B.C.E.

On the death of Obodas III in 9 B.C.E. a grave internal crisis occurred in the Nabataean kingdom, and the rule of the kingdom did not pass immediately to Aretas IV, Obodas' son and successor. The crisis had its origin in a quarrel between Obodas III and Herod which was aggravated by the intrigues of Syllaeus (*Συλλαῖος*), the strong man in the Nabataean kingdom in the days of Obodas III.

Thus Josephus says that 'the king of Arabia, Obodas, was inactive and sluggish by nature; for the most part his realm was governed by Syllaeus, who was a clever man, still young in years and handsome.'[108]

This brief statement accurately sums up Syllaeus' energetic character in contrast to Obodas III's weakness. Josephus[109] also describes Syllaeus' attempt to usurp the Nabataean throne. It is interesting to note that, on the death of Obodas III, he immediately became, in the eyes of the Emperor Augustus, the officially recognized Nabataean ruler, a status he enjoyed until he was condemned to

108 *AJ*, XVI, 220. The evidence of Strabo, *op. cit.* (above, n. 2), pp. 16, 4, 23–24, is similar to that of Josephus.

109 *AJ* XVI, 295–296.

death in Rome on the evidence of Nicolaus of Damascus.

Since Syllaeus had such a strong personality, and was for several months in control of all the affairs of state, including the royal treasury and mint, and had previously had extremely wide power concentrated in his hands, particularly, so it seems, in the military and financial spheres, we should not be surprised to find that immediately after the death of Obodas III he took advantage of his new position to strike his own coins.

The Numismatic Evidence

As early as 1822 de Saulcy[110] published an article in which he described three hitherto unknown Nabataean coins. Among these was a small bronze coin (see No. 44), on whose reverse, to the left of the two cornucopiae, there appears the inscription , which he correctly read as שלי (Syllaeus), the ש and the ל being joined together as in a monogram (the vertical stroke of the ש is here longer than usual, giving it the form of a Nabataean ל) It may be added that the joining together of different Nabataean letters to form ligatures is a very common feature in Nabataean coinage. (We shall deal with the various instances of this later.) What interests us here, however, is the parallelism between these joined letters and an inscription on a coin of Aretas IV (No. 113) in which the word שלם (=whole) appears in full on some coins, and on others in the form of the monogram , another example of the joining of the letters ש and ל.

In the meantime there have come to light other coins on which the reading is clearly the same as that on the type reproduced by de Saulcy, who correctly discerned that שלי is the Nabataean name of *Συλλαῖος*, despite the fact that he did not have at his disposal explicit documents, such as are now available. For besides the numerous Nabataean inscriptions in which the name שלי occurs,[111] an inscription of Syllaeus was found at Miletus, and published by Clermont-Ganneau.[112] It is an important document, and hence we propose to deal with it in some detail.

The inscription is written in Nabataean and Greek, and is broken, with the ends of the lines missing. It was written following a clash between Syllaeus and Herod, at the time of Syllaeus' visit to Rome, during which he tried, as he did on other visits, to persuade the Emperor Augustus of the justice of his claims. Dedicated to Dusares, the Nabataean god (to be identified apparently with Apollo),[113] in the temple of the Apollo at Miletus, the inscription reads as follows:

שלי אח מלכא בר תימ[ו] . . .
מדתא על חיי עבדת מלכא בירח ט[בת שנת . . .]
[*ΣΥΛΛ*]*ΑΙΟΣ ΑΔΕΛΦΟΣ ΒΑΣΙ* [*ΛΕΩΣ*]...
ΑΝΕΘΕΚΕΝ ΔΙΙ ΔΟΥ[*ΣΑΡΕΙ*]...

(Syllaeus, the brother of the king, the son of Teim[u] . . .
a tribute for the life of Obodas the king, in the month of T[evet in the . . . year . . .])

As the date in the inscription has not been preserved, it is not clear whether it was written when Syllaeus went to Rome for his final trial, in 9 B.C.E., the last year of Obodas III's life, or whether it rather dates from an earlier visit to Rome on one of the numerous occasions of friction between him and Herod during 12–9 B.C.E. Although Obodas' name is associated with the date — על חיי עבדת מלכא (for the life of Obodas the king) — this does not necessarily mean that the inscription was written during his lifetime. For it is quite possible that Syllaeus would have preferred, even after Obodas' death, to date the inscription according to the king's regnal years, in

110 *MN* III (1882), pp. 194–197.

111 See, for example, *CIS* II, 208, 221.

112 *RAO* VII (1906), pp. 310–312, 328; VIII (1924), Pl. VI.

113 A large number of the Nabataean inscriptions mention the god Dusares. See, for example, *CIS* II, 198, 199, 206, 208, 209, 350. He was the chief Nabataean god. And see Cooke, *op. cit.* (above, n. 8), p. 218.

which case the second line may be supplemented as follows:

על חיי עבדת מלכא בירח ט[בת שנת עשרין וחדה...[

(. . . for the life of Obodas the king, in the month of T[evet in the twenty-first year . . .])

Syllaeus certainly had no wish to indicate the date according to the years of his rival Aretas, nor did he dare as yet to reckon his own years . . .

Strabo,[114] the contemporary of Obodas and Syllaeus, states that 'the (Nabataean) king has as Administrator one of his companions, who is called "brother".'

The expression אח מלכא, the brother of the king, does not denote any kinship, but rather connotes Syllaeus' high status in the Nabataean royal court, thus confirming Josephus' statement. The title may have conferred on Syllaeus the highest privileges after the king, which leads to the conclusion that he was preferred to Aretas IV. If this is so, the emphasis on his status as 'the brother of the king' was intended to justify his acts of usurpation during Obodas III's last years, and especially in 9 B.C.E.

Thus we see that in 9 B.C.E. Syllaeus enjoyed personal and political status that permitted him to strike coins. In addition to those coins on which his name שלי clearly appears, leaving no room for doubt, there are others whose characteristics attest to their having been struck in 9 B.C.E., a year marked by confusion in the Nabataean royal house.

A. The Silver Coins (Nos. 40, 41, Sup 4)

In contrast to all other Nabataean silver issues, both early and late, the denomination of the silver coins of this group is particularly small, half that of the silver coins of Obodas III's later group and that of Aretas IV. The average weight of these coins is 2.2 gr. and hence, technically, they undoubtedly belong to the minting of 14 B.C.E.—8 C.E., when the weight of silver coins was about 4.5 gr. The same applies to another interesting silver type found after this work was completed (Sup 4). It weighs 0.86 gr., and seems to be half the denomination of the regular issue. Its light weight is due to its having been perforated and rubbed.

The Inscriptions

In contrast also to all the other known Nabataean silver issues, these coins have no complete inscriptions but only individual letters which are difficult to decipher, in particular because of the uncertain date of minting. If we knew who struck them, it would be easier to assign the right coins to the right names.

On the basis of several hints derived from the nature and weight of the coins, and from the heads depicted on them, we are disposed to assume that they date from the end of Obodas III's days or from the beginning of those of Aretas IV. On the reverse of these coins there are the letters (ש ח) or in the opposite order (ח ש). De Saulcy,[115] who first published one of these coins, and then Dussaud,[116] held that the letters ח ש stand for Aretas and Shuqailat, and hence they unhesitatingly attributed these coins to Aretas IV.

But it is apparently not quite so simple. On the obverse of these coins (this is particularly clear on No. 40) there occurs on the left the symbol ⊧, which is very reminiscent of the letter ⊧ (ש), and which Dussaud failed to read correctly. That this is actually the letter ש is unacceptable, since the two differ from each other in many respects. Whereas the vertical

114 Strabo, *op. cit.* (above, n. 2), 16, 4, 21. We shall, when dealing with the wives of the Nabataean kings, discuss at greater length the expression אח (brother) as a technical term which does not, as in the present case, indicate a family relationship: see pp. 59–60, below.

115 *AN* I (1877), pp. 462–464.

116 Dussaud, *op. cit.* (above, n. 17), p. 224, No. 36.

stroke of the common ש is curved, with its lower end turning slightly to the left (ש), the corresponding stroke in the symbol under discussion is completely straight and elongated. Also, the horizontal strokes to the right of the Nabataean ש slant inwards, while the corresponding horizontal strokes in the present symbol are entirely parallel to each other. This cannot be merely a different version of the letter ש, since the same artist engraved a 'normal' ש on the other side of the coin. This symbol is therefore neither a ש, nor any other letter in the Nabataean alphabet, nor some Nabataean numeral. We are therefore left with no alternative but to regard it as a monogram, as is the case of many other Nabataean issues. That the Nabataeans had a partiality for monograms, of which this specimen may be the first instance, can be seen from the coins of Aretas IV (p. 97, below). By placing the symbol horizontally we get the form ⊥⊥ , which is the monogram of the letters ⊥ ⊥ = ב ע. If our reconstruction is correct, this is the monogram of Obodas (apparently Obodas III).

The Ruler's Portrait

Since the king's head on those silver coins resembles greatly that of Obodas III, especially as depicted on his later silver coins (e.g., Nos. 32 and 34) we are led to assume that the minter actually intended to depict this king's head. This assumption is confirmed by the monogram ⊥⊥ (Obodas).

It is true that on several of his earlier coins Aretas IV resembles Obodas III somewhat, especially as far as his diadem and the form of his hairdress are concerned. Yet Obodas III has very characteristic features — particularly a firm chin — which cannot be confused with those of Aretas IV. In a chronological discussion of the shape of Aretas IV's head (see p. 43, below) we conclude that the latest date a Nabataean king's head occurs with a diadem and with ringlets hanging down (as in the case of Obodas III) was in Aretas IV's fourth year, which was 6 B.C.E. The silver coin under discussion here is, therefore, no later than that year.

But what is the meaning of the ש and the ח on the reverse of the coin? If the date of the coin is not later than 6 B.C.E., the ש cannot refer to Shuqailat, since this name does not occur in the Nabataean royal family before 18 C.E. (see coin No. 96). Neither does the letter ח necessarily refer to Aretas, for it appears regularly on Nabataean coins from as early as the days of Malichus I. Nor can these two letters be meant to indicate a date. For while the letter ש often occurs as the abbreviation of שנה (= year), we never find ח or any other letter as a numeral either on coins or on inscriptions. Nor is it feasible that the ח should be the initial letter of a numeral indicating, together with the ש, a date, and standing, for example, for ח(דה) ש(נת) (year one), since such an abbreviation could also stand for ש(נת) ח(מש) (year five). Accordingly some other interpretation has to be found for these letters. Whereas we have advanced several suggestions for the letter ח, which occurs on coins over a lengthy period, it is otherwise with the letter ש.

We have suggested previously, on the basis of various features, that these coins belong to the end of Obodas III's reign or the beginning of Aretas IV's. It is thus almost self-evident that the letter should refer to שלי (Syllaeus), whom we know from a bronze coin (No. 44) on which his name clearly occurs. But if it is a coin of Syllaeus, why, then, are Obodas III's head and monogram depicted on it?

As Obodas III's commander-in-chief and the strong man in the kingdom, Syllaeus regarded himself as the potential heir to the throne. Hence it is possible that immediately before or after the death of Obodas III, when the struggle for power between Aretas IV and Syllaeus became more acute, the latter struck these coins, on which his name is hinted at, as well as that of Obodas III in the monogram. The striking of Obodas III's head on the coins is indicative of Syllaeus' unwillingness to depict Aretas IV, the natural heir; it also ex-

presses his loyalty to the former king, from whom he derived his authority and power. In type these are coins produced under the inspiration of Obodas III and struck shortly before or after his death, during the struggle between Syllaeus and Aretas IV for the succession, at the beginning of 9 B.C.E.

Despite the detailed manner in which we have described these coins and despite our 'feeling' that they were struck in the confused period of 9 B.C.E., since they lack the clear stamp of one particular ruler, we still consider them enigmatic issues, about which there is a great deal of uncertainty. Additional finds may shed more light on them.

Syllaeus was supported by the army, which undoubtedly remained loyal to him by reason of the pay it received. This circumstance may have influenced him to issue these particular coins. Because of the severe shortage of silver at the time (Syllaeus was constrained to appease Augustus with huge sums of money), he struck silver coins of small denominations, but issued a larger number of them, so that, despite the limited silver, they might have a wider circulation.

B. The Bronze Coins

Some not very rare bronze coins (e.g., Nos. 42, 43, 43A) are to be assigned to the silver coins described above, because of their similarity to this group. As on the silver coins, the head of Obodas III, or at least one resembling him, appears. On the obverse of the coins, to the left of the head, is the symbol ⊧, apparently, as we have suggested, the monogram of Obodas' name. The letters ח and ש also occur on these bronze coins, exactly as on the silver coins. All that we have said above concerning the silver coins applies to this group as well.

The Symbols

There is nothing new about the symbols on the coins of Syllaeus. After an interval, the eagle 'returns' during the last years of Obodas III, while the two cornucopiae are a continuation of the design on coin No. 24 of Obodas III.

The Head

As we have seen, it is apparently the head of Obodas III which appears on the silver coins, and on one group of the bronze coins. But on the most important type of coin struck by Syllaeus, that bearing his name (No. 44), an entirelly different head is depicted. It resembles that of Aretas IV in the use of the laurel wreath as decoration. If the actual features are examined closely, however, they will be seen to be different from those on the other coins of Aretas IV. The most conspicuous difference is in the nose, which in general is larger on the coins of Aretas IV, and has delicate lines here. It is not suggested that the head depicted here is that of Syllaeus. Nabataean coins are not particularly distinguished for their accuracy of execution, and even the head of Aretas IV differs on the various coins which he himself struck. We would prefer rather to describe this head as resembling that of Aretas IV and appearing on coins bearing the inscription שלי (Syllaeus). On some of the later coins of Obodas III (Nos. 35, 36 and 37), there appears a king's head, garlanded with a laurel wreath, which closely resembles that of Aretas IV. In point of fact all laureate heads, because of their particular hairdress, look alike, and thus it is difficult to distinguish clearly the different features of the various kings. Accordingly, the inscription and not the head is invariably the deciding factor.

VIII. THE COINS OF ARETAS IV, 9 B.C.E. — 40 C.E.

Under Aretas IV, the most distinguished and remarkable of the Nabataean kings, the country reached the zenith of its cultural, social, and political development. Many of the clearly-dated Nabataean archaeological finds in art and architecture were produced in the days of Aretas IV, as were most of the monumental inscriptions and the highly decorated Nabataean pottery.[117]

But the most conspicuous feature among the Nabataean finds is the enormous quantity of coins struck during this king's reign. It may be asserted that eight of every ten Nabataean coins are of Aretas IV. This vast quantity of coins testifies primarily to a flourishing economy. The period of Aretas IV was one in which Nabataean international trade reached its peak and the Nabataeans established close relations with countries overseas. Accordingly, inscriptions and coins of Aretas IV have been found in different parts of the ancient world, far beyond the limits of Nabataean settlement.[118]

The historical information about Aretas IV is also comparatively extensive, enabling us to supplement the considerable epigraphical, archaeological and numismatic evidence relating to his period.

A struggle preceded Aretas IV's accession to the throne. Accused by the Romans of disregarding their authority, he succeeded after a brief period of confusion in seizing the reigns of government and in opening a new and splendid chapter in Nabataean history, a chapter rendered all the more notable when compared to the political unrest and border disputes which marked his father's reign.

The circumstances attending Aretas IV's accession originated in a quarrel which broke out between his father Obodas III and Herod, and which was heightened by the active intervention and intrigues of Syllaeus, who accordingly became the strong man in the kingdom. On the death of Obodas III in 9 B.C.E., Aretas IV, regarding himself as the natural heir to the throne, proclaimed himself king. Incensed at this act, Augustus the emperor of Rome rebuked him for not first obtaining imperial permission. The emperor's anger may have been merely a pretext to strengthen the position of Syllaeus, who had promised Augustus generous gifts of silver if the latter appointed him the ruler of the Nabataean kingdom. Realizing that his own position was weak, Aretas IV sent envoys with a costly gold crown to Augustus, before whom they accused Syllaeus of having caused Obodas III's death by poisoning him and of having exercised royal power while the king was still alive. They dwelt at length on Syllaeus' degenerate private life, in particular his licentiousness and corrupt financial practices.

But the accusations of the envoys were to no avail. Augustus refused to listen to them and dismissed them, declining the gift they had brought from Aretas. At this time the relations between the Jews and the Nabataeans worsened as a result of the anarchy prevailing after Obodas III's death. Believing Syllaeus' false reports, Augustus was angry with Herod. The latter, realizing the great influence which Syllaeus exerted upon Augustus, felt it imperative to send someone to plead his cause

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117 See A. Negev: *The Nabataean Painted Pottery of Avdat and the Chronology of the Nabataean Painted Ware* (Hebrew; Dissertation, 1963; Mimeographed); G. and A. Horsfield: Sela-Petra, the Rock of Edom and Nabatene. IV. The Finds, *QDAP* IX (1941), pp. 105–204, Pls. VI–XLIX B; N. Glueck, *op. cit.* (above, n. 106), pp. 167–174.

118 Nabataean coins of Aretas IV have been uncovered in excavations at Curium in Cyprus (see D.H. Cox: Coins from the Excavations at Curium, 1932–1953, *NNM* 145 [1959], p. 26, No. 202), at Dura-Europos (see A.R. Bellinger: *The Excavations at Dura-Europos, Final Report VI, The Coins*, New Haven, 1949, p. 10, Nos. 166, 167), at Susa in Iran (see Ghirsman and Sailes: *Memoires de la mission archéologique en Iran*, XXXVIII, Mission de Suslane, Paris 1965, p. 202, No. 499), and in Switzerland (in a personal communication from Dr. H. Cahn, Basle: see above, n. 5).

and to smooth over the differences between himself and the emperor. Herod entrusted this task to Nicolaus of Damascus, who accused Syllaeus, in the presence of the emperor, of corruption, murder, immorality, and cheating. Nicolaus was assisted in this task by witnesses who abandoned Syllaeus and came over to his side. Nicolaus succeeded in turning the scales against Syllaeus to such an extent that Augustus condemned Syllaeus to death. Aretas therepon succeeded officially to the throne.[119]

The Numismatic Evidence

Aretas IV, the greatest minter of Nabataean coins, reigned for 49 years, a lengthy period in any people's history. The changes in the international monetary system and the internal economic conditions that marked his reign left their clear and distinct imprint on his coins. Thus the coins minted at the end of his reign are unlike those at its beginning. The coins struck during the reign of Aretas IV can be divided into four chronological groups:

A. The silver coins of the first—sixth years of his reign (9–4 B.C.E.);

B. The bronze coins of the fourth—sixth years of his reign (6–4 B.C.E.);

C. The bronze and silver coins of the tenth—twenty-fourth years of his reign (1–5 C.E.);

D. The silver and bronze coins of the twenty-seventh—forty-eighth years of his reign (18–19 C.E.).

This division enables us to deal with each group separately, and so to highlight the different stages in the monetary development which took place under Aretas IV. It is interesting to note that the process was not continuous but rather spasmodic, suggesting that certain economic or 'banking' needs imposed sudden changes at specific periods.

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119 *AJ*, XVI, 271–299, 335–355.

GROUP A

The Silver Coins of Aretas' First—Sixth Years

To this group belong the earliest coins of Aretas IV, all made of silver.

The coins of the first year, the most interesting ones in this group, may be divided into two sub-groups, the first, struck at the beginning, and the second at the end, of Aretas IV's first year.

The first sub-group (Nos. 47 and 47A) still retains some characteristics of the coins of Obodas III. Like most of those coins, its most conspicuous feature is the depiction of the head of the queen, whose name is not mentioned. In the case of the coins of Obodas III, however, her name is unknown, being mentioned neither on coins nor in inscriptions.

In this first sub-group the head of the king is diademed (not laureate), the date is given as שנת חדה (Year one), and Aretas' portrait looks rather strange, almost like a caricature, apparently because of the poor ability of the artist who engraved the dies. All the elements on the coins of this sub-group (of which only three specimens, from two different dies, have been found so far are indicative of unskilled work.

This sub-group includes a somewhat unusual coin (No. 46). As we have seen (p. 28, above), the minting of coins of the denomination of a half-shekel ceased after Obodas III's seventh year (24 B.C.E.). Suddenly we find a coin of Aretas IV's first year in the denomination of a half-shekel. As this coin is the only instance of a half-shekel coin minted after 24 B.C.E., we are inclined to assume that it is an exceptional case, particularly since we believe that it was struck at the time of Aretas' accession to the throne, for some political reason or as a matter of prestige. We would therefore designate it a commemorative coin, which therefore would not alter the basic monetary standard introduced in 23 B.C.E.

Furthermore, the appearance of the unique small silver denomination (see Sup 5), revealed after the completion of this work, proves that in Aretas IV's first year, a special commemorative issue was struck including three different denominations: half-shekel (No. 46), denarius (No. 47) and half-denarius (Sup 5).

The coins of the second sub-group were struck at the end of Aretas IV's first year, and were undoubtedly made by a different, more accomplished artist, for they are distinguished for their beauty. Their general appearance is also different: on each side of the coins there is only one head (a feature continued until 19 C.E.), and, for the first time in the history of Nabataean minting, the name of the queen is mentioned. The date of these coins is given numerically, 1 שנת (year 1; see coins Nos. 49, 49A), and not in words. The presentation of the date in words, characteristic of many Nabataean silver coins before Aretas IV, now disappears gradually, occurring on Nabataean silver coins for the last time on an issue of Aretas IV's second year, שנת תרתין (No. 50). In this second sub-group the king's head is laureate, something we first encountered at the end of Obodas III's reign (coins Nos. 35, 36, 37). Henceforth, this becomes increasingly customary, so that after Aretas' fourth year the head of a Nabataean king is no longer diademed but only laureate.

Coin No. 48, with its date of שנת חדה (year one), is an intermediate type between the first and second sub-groups. Of the latter, the coins of Aretas' second, third, fourth, and sixth years are a continuation (Nos. 50, 51, 53, 65).

The Heads of Group A

a. The Head of Aretas IV. This occurs in two forms: (1) In the earlier, 'archaic' form, the hair is diademed, falls straight down onto the nape of the neck and covers the ears; a robe is wrapped around the shoulders (coins Nos. 47, 47A, 50?). (2) In the later, 'new' form, the diadem is replaced by a laurel wreath, and the hair is longer and curlier. Only the head is shown, without the shoulders and the robe. Above the forehead is an interesting detail: on the front of the laurel wreath is a decoration in the shape of a V. This is exclusive to the Nabataeans, for we have not found such a decoration on the laurel wreaths of the kings of other nations.

b. The Head of Ḥuldu. Aretas IV's first wife (until 16 C.E.), is the first Nabataean queen to be mentioned on coins and in inscriptions. She is invariably portrayed with a veil which leaves the front of her head and the laurel wreath on it exposed to view,[120] but covers her hair and the nape of her neck and hangs down onto the robe wrapped around her shoulders. On the coins of the first sub-group the veil is depicted crudely and schematically in vertical lines, whereas on the coins of the second sub-group it is delicately delineated, with well-defined folds. At times the queen also wears jewellery, a necklace of beads as well as earrings; the latter are spiral-shaped on coin No. 49 and shaped like a pendulum on No. 49A.

The Inscriptions

The following are the inscriptions on the obverse of the coins of Group A.

Nos. 47, 47A — חרתת מלך נבטו שנת חדה (Aretas, king of the Nabataeans. Year one).

No. 48 — חרתת מלך נבטו רחם עמה (Aretas, king of the Nabataeans, the lover of his people). (Inscription begins at top left.)

Nos. 49, 49A, 51, 52, 53, 65 — חרתת מלך נבטו רחם עמה (Aretas, king of the Nabataeans, the lover of his people). (Inscription begins at bottom right.)

The date שנת חדה (year one) on coins of the first subg-roup (Nos. 47, 47A) occurs, as can be seen, on the obverse, immediately after the king's name and title. There is no inscription on the reverse of the coins of this sub-group,

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120 Apparently the queen also has an additional decoration in the form of a V in front of the laurel wreath. It is only in individual instances that it can be clearly distinguished, owing to its diminutive size.

nor have they the title רחם עמה, as have the coins of the second sub-group from the end of the first year (Nos. 49, 49A).

The question that arises is whether the title רחם עמה (reminiscent of the Hellenistic *ΦΙΛΟΔΗΜΟΣ*) was conferred on the king only towards the end of his first year, or whether it was merely omitted on the earlier coins for reasons of space. That Aretas did not have the title at the beginning of his first year is obvious from its absence on the large, beautiful coin No. 46. It is possible that the later, more delicate series of year one was issued when the title רחם עמה was bestowed on him.

The inscriptions on the reverse of the coins of Group A are as follows:

No. 46 — חרתת מלכ[א מלך] נבטו שנת חדה (Aretas [the] king, [king of] the Nabataeans. Year one)

No. 48 — חלדו מלכת נבטו שנת חדה (Ḥuldu, queen of the Nabataeans. Year one)

Nos. 49, 49A — 1 חלדו מלכת נבטו שנת (Ḥuldu, queen of the Nabataeans. Year 1)

No. 50 — חלדו מלכת נבטו שנת תרתין (Ḥuldu, queen of the Nabataeans, Year two)

No. 51 — 2 חלדו מלכת נבטו] שנת ([Ḥuldu, queen of the Nabataeans.] Year 2)

No. 52 — 3 חלדו מלכת נבטו שנת (Ḥuldu, queen of the Nabataeans. Year 3)

No. 53 — 4 חלדו מלכת] נבטו שנת ([Ḥuldu, queen of] the Nabataeans. Year 4)

No. 65 — 6 [חלדו מלכת נבטו] שנת ([Ḥuldu, queen of the Nabataeans.] Year 6)

From Aretas IV's third year onwards all the dates on the silver coins appear in numerals only.

On the reverse of one coin, which is in the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum, Jerusalem, and which apparently belongs to this group (it is undated), there is a curious mistake in the inscription which reads: חלדו מלך נבט... (Ḥuldu, king of the Nabat . . .).

The Letter ח and the Mark O

Under Aretas there continue to appear the letter ח and the mark O. We have explained the latter (see p. 20, above) as the mintmark of Reqem (= Petra). From table C below it can be seen that the letter and the mark occur on the coins of Group A in a variety of ways — either singly or together and either once or twice on a coin, while on some coins they do not occur at all.

Table C

Chronology of the letter ח and the mark O onthe coins of Group A, Silver conis of Aretas IV's First–Sixth Years

Reference		*Obverse of Coin*		*Reverse of Coin*	
No. in Catalogue	*Year*	*On left*	*On right*	*On left*	*On right*
46	1	ח	—	ח	0
47	1	—	—	ח	—
47A	1	—	—	—	—
48	1	—	—	—	—
49	1	ח	0	ח	0
49A	1	ח	0	—	—
50	2	ח	—	ח	—
51	2	?	?	ח	0 (?)
52	3	?	?	ח	0
53	4	—	—	—	—
Sup 6	5	?	0	—	?
65	6	?	?	—	0

Explanation of symbols used in table:

— No mark or letter

? Difficult to determine whether there is a mark and/or letter because of the poor state of preservation.

GROUP B

The Bronze Coins of Aretas' Fourth—Sixth Years

No silver coins were struck for a considerable time after Aretas' sixth year. Apparently those minted during the first six years of his reign were enough to meet the needs of the Nabataean market for at least another two or three years. From Aretas' fourth year onwards a large quantity of bronze coins was struck which in form and characteristics are a continuation of the later bronze coins of Obodas III (Nos. 35, 36, 37, 39).

This series, the first bronze coins struck by Aretas IV, may also be subdivided into two chronological groups. The earlier group has archaic elements very reminiscent of the coins of Obodas III, and was, we believe, the first to be issued in bronze in Aretas' fourth year (No. 54). Characteristic of this earlier group is the 'Oriental' head, with the hair diademed and falling more or less straight down. Aretas IV is depicted in this manner on his silver coins of the first sub-group of his first year (Nos. 47, 47A), as is Obodas III.

On this earlier group of Aretas IV's bronze coins (No. 54) we have the latest appearance of a Nabataean king in an 'archaic' style. Towards the end of Aretas' fourth year there appears the 'new' laureate head, which we first came across on coins of Obodas III (No. 37) and which henceforth until the close of Nabataean minting is the only type that occurs. In the light of these facts we can state an important chronological principle: every Nabataean coin on which a king's head is depicted in an 'archaic' style (that is, diademed and not laureate), even if the inscription is illegible, is definitely no later than the fourth year of Aretas IV (6 B.C.E.).

The coins of the earlier, 'archaic' group show the date in words, שנת ארבע, year four, in contrast to the coins of this type struck towards the end of Aretas' fourth year, and in his fifth and sixth years, on which the date is given in numerals:

Nos. 55, 56 — 4 שנת (year 4)
Nos. 58, 59, 60 — 5 שנת (year 5)
No. 66 — 6 שנת (year 6)

The coins of the fourth, and especially of the sixth, year are rare. Those of the fifth year, however, having been struck in considerable quantities, are found in large numbers and in several sub-types and variants; the prevailing type is that which has on its reverse the figure of a woman facing left and raising her hand. We have previously (p. 34) suggested that this figure, which occurs on the later bronze coins of Obodas III, is that of the queen. If this is so, the woman on the coins under discussion here is Ḥuldu, Aretas IV's first wife. Another type, struck in the fifth year of Aretas' reign, depicts a different figure of a woman crowned and standing right (No. 59). This type, which is very rare, was published in 1887 by Babelon,[121] who contended that the woman greatly resembled the Astarte on the Byblos city coins. A closer examination of this coin, and of a similar one found recently, however, reveals that it is Tyche, or the queen in the form of Tyche. While she differs from the woman on the other coins, there is undoubtedly a considerable resemblance between them. Can it be that we have here an attempt to depict the queen (Ḥuldu) in different forms? In appearance alone, this is a Tyche, as Hill also maintained.[122]

Another coin of Aretas' fifth year has, in addition to the usual inscription, the letters פצ, apparently an abbreviation of the name פצאל (Phasael), the king's son (No. 60). We shall see later that there are several types of coins with this unusual inscription.

On the Meaning of the Inscription [פצ]אל on the Coins of Aretas IV

Some Nabataean inscriptions mention the members of Aretas IV's family, in particular

121 *RN* V (1887), p. 376, Pl. X, 5.
122 Hill, *op. cit.* (above, n. 19), p. xviii.

Year	*Date*	*Silver Coins*	*Bronze Coins*	*Inscriptions*	*Reference*
1	9/8 B.C.E.	Year one/1 (I /שנת חדה)		in the month of Elul year 1 of Aretas, king of the Nabataeans	*CIS* II, 332
2	8/7	Year two/2 (II /שנת תרתין)		. . year 2 (ascribed to Aretas IV)	
3	7/6	Year 3 (III שנת)			
4	6/5	Year 4 (X שנת)	Year four/4		
5	5/4	Year 5 (ל שנת)	Year 5	[Year] 5 of Aretas [king of the Nabataeans]	*CIS* II, 160
6	4/3	Year 6 (שנת ל|)	Year 6		
7	3/2				
8	2/1				
9	1B.C.E./ 1 C.E.			in the month of Nisan year nine of Aretas, king of the Nabataeans, the lover of his people	*CIS* II, 197; cf. 198
10	1/2C.E.		Year ten/10		
11	2/3		Year 11	in the month of Av year 11 [of his reign] (perhaps year 12 or 13)	*CIS* II, 158
12	3/4				
13	4/5			in the month of Shevaṭ year thirteen of Aretas, king of the Nabataeans, the lover of his people	*CIS* II, 199
14	5/6				
15	6/7				
16	7/8	Year 16 (ו\ל שנת)		[year] 16 of Aretas the king [year] sixteen of Aretas	*CIS* II, 349; cf. 442 *CIS* II, 200
17	8/9	C.E.		in the month of Nisan year seventeen of our master Aretas, king of the Nabataeans, the lover of his people	*CIS* II, 201
18	9/10			year 18 of Aretas the king	*BR*, p. 312
19	10/11				
20	11/12				
21	12/13				
22	13/14				
23	14/15				
24	15/16		Year 24 (24 שנת)	in year twenty-four of Aretas, king of the Nabataeans, the lover of his people	*CIS*, II, 202
25	16/17			from the 26th of Av year 25 of Aretas, king of the Nabataeans, the lover of his people	*CIS* II, 204

26	17/18			
27	18/19	Year 27		
28	19/20	Year 28	in the month of Iyyar in year 28 of Aretas, kin[g of the Nabataeans, the lover of his people]	*CIS* II, 203
29	20/21	Year 29	[yea]r 29 of Aretas, king of the Nabataeans, the lover of his people	*CIS* II, 354
30	21/22	Year 30		
31	22/23	Year 31		
32	23/24	Year 32		
33	24/25			
34	25/26C.E.	Year 34	in the month of Iyyar year 34 of Aretas, king of the Nabataeans, the lover of his people	*CIS* II, 205
35	26/27	Year 35	in the month of Iyyar year thirty-five (שנת תלתין וחמש) of Aretas, king of the Nabataeans, the lover of his people	*CIS* II, 206
36	27/28	Year 36	in the mo[n]th of Nisan year thirty-six of Aretas, king of the Nabataeans, the lover of his people	*CIS* II, 207
37	28/29			
38	29/30			
39	30/31			
40	31/32	Year 40 . . . ?	in the month of Nisan year forty of Aretas king of the Nabataeans, the lover of his people	*CIS* II, 209; cf. 210
41	32/33	Year 41		
42	33/34	Year 42		
43	34/35		in year 43 of Aretas, king of the Nabataeans, the lover of his people	*CIS* II, 211
44	35/36	Year 44	in the month of Ṭevet year forty-four of Aretas, king of the Nabataeans, the lover of his people	*CIS* II, 212
45	36/37		in the mo[n]th of Ṭevet year 45 of Aretas, king of the Nabataeans, the lover of his people	*CIS* II, 213
46	37/38	Year 46	in year forty-six of Aretas, king of the Nabataeans, the lover of his people	
47	38/39	Year 47		
48	39/40	Year 48	in the month of Nisan year forty-eight of Aretas, king of the Nabataeans, the lover of his people	*CIS* II, 214; cf. 215

his sons and daughters. One found in Petra[123] and dated 'year 29 of Aretas' (20 C.E.) contains the following:

. . . על חיי חרתת מלך נבטו רחם עמ[ה ושקילת]/
[א]חתה מלכת נבטו ומלכו ועבדת ורבאל ופצאל
ושעודת והגרו בנוהי וחרתת בר הג[רו
ברברה] . . . /

(. . . for the life of Aretas, king of the Nabataeans, the lover of [his] people [and Shuqailat] / his sister, queen of the Nabataeans, and Malichus and Obodas and Rabbel and Phasael and Se'udat and Hagru his children, and Aretas, the son of Hag[ru, his grandson] . . ./)

Another inscription, found in Avdat and published by A. Negev,[124] mentions עבדת ופצאל ושעודת בני חרתת (Obodas and Phasael and Se'udat, the sons of Aretas).

We suggest that the letters פצ are an abbreviation of פצאל, Phasael, particularly since the name occurs on coins of Aretas, the only Nabataean king, as far as is known, who had a son called Phasael. What made Aretas mention specifically the name of Phasael on his coins and not that of any of his other sons?

The first of these inscriptions apparently gives the chronological order of Aretas' children, a conclusion supported to some extent by the second, fragmentary inscription. The name of Shuqailat, the queen, is followed by that of Malichus, who heads the list of the children, a position one would expect to be occupied by the first-born. And indeed he did succeed his father, an indication that we have here the order in which Aretas' children were born. Phasael was therefore Aretas' fourth son, and is mentioned on a coin of his father's fifth year (5 B.C.E.) because, we suggest, that is when he was born. For his name occurs only on coins issued in this particular year. Besides the dated coin bearing the inscription פצ[אל] (No. 60), small bronze coins with the identical inscription were struck in that same year, so that it may be assumed that the occasion of Phasael's birth was the reason for issuing coins bearing his name.

But our assumption involves a difficulty. For if Phasael's birth was commemorated by coins bearing his name, why were his other brothers not given the same honour? This may be explained by the supposition that Aretas' three sons were born before his accession, whereas Phasael was the first son to be born after that event, and at a time, too, when Aretas struck coins. As for the children younger than Phasael, it may be that their names were not mentioned because they were born in years when no coins were struck (for economic or political reasons, as we shall see later, p. 49), for example in the seventh, eighth, ninth, twelfth and fifteenth, or even subsequent, years of Aretas' reign.

Our assumption that the letters פצ are meant to indicate the name פצאל (Phasael), the new 'prince' born in Aretas' fifth year, is supported by the special emblem of the palm-branch which occurs, except for a single other instance, only on one group of the coins which bear the letters פצ (Nos. 61, 61A, 61B, 62, 62A, 63, 63A), and is otherwise unknown in Nabataean numismatics.

On the coins of this group the palm-branch occurs alongside parallel cornucopiae, the two together forming a design which appears only with the letters פצ and never without them, either under Aretas or under any other Nabataean king. Thus there seems to be a connection between these letters and the palm-branch. If our reconstruction of the year of Phasael's birth is correct, the palm-branch symbolized this important and joyful event. There is only one other instance in which the palm-branch occurs on a Nabataean coin. This is on an unusual specimen (No. 97) struck in the days of Shuqailat, Aretas' second

123 *CIS* II, 354.

124 A. Negev: Nabataean Inscriptions from 'Avdat (Oboda), *IEJ* 11 (1961), pp. 127–128.

wife, and associated, so it seems, with her marriage to Aretas and with her coronation, apparently round about 18 C.E. (see p. 57, below).

We believe that these coins, that of Shuqailat and that of Phasael, the only ones on which a palm-branch occurs, are connected with notable personal events in the life of the king and of the royal family, the symbolic significance of the palm-branch being the reason for its use on these particular coins.

After we had written the above, we came across a coin (No. 61), in the collection of Mr. A. Frankel of Tel Aviv, on which the inscription פצאל appears in full.

The Small Bronze Coins

Small bronze coins, averaging 2 gr. in weight, were first struck in 9 B.C.E., in the days of Syllaeus (Nos. 42–45).

The next small bronze coins are those on which the dominant design is the head of Aretas IV on the obverse and two cornucopiae crossed on the reverse, and on which the marks and letters occur in no fixed order and in many different combinations. These, we believe, were struck in the early years of Aretas IV's reign, but not earlier than his fourth year — when he began to issue bronze coins, and not later than 18 C.E. — when Shuqailat was queen in place of Ḥuldu and the coins began to bear a different character. Of this type only three specimens (coin No. 57) have the date 4 (= 6 B.C.E.). Characteristic of this group of coins, which includes a large number of types (Nos. 57, 61–78), is the absence on them of the letter ש or any other reference to Shuqailat. Hence they all appear to have been struck before her days. Since they are undated, we are unable to fix their earliest and latest dates. In view of their large quantity, they were presumably issued over a long period, apparently during most of the years between 6 B.C.E. and 18 C.E. The letter ח appears repeatedly on these coins, occasionally as many as four times on the same specimen. At least one such ח may refer to Ḥuldu, Aretas' first wife.[125] There are three explanations for the appearance of the letter ח on these coins: to honour Aretas, to honour his wife, Ḥuldu, and the third time as the letter which generally appears together with the mark O on the issues of the earlier Nabataean kings. On the coins struck in the days of Shuqailat, after Ḥuldu's death, the letter ח disappears almost entirely, and appears only on individual types, apparently in a reference to Aretas (see the discussion, below, on coins Nos. 112–122).

GROUP C

Bronze and Silver Coins of Aretas' Tenth—Twenty-Fourth Years

Coins of Years Ten and Eleven

After an interval of three years Aretas IV struck the most interesting coins in the entire range of Nabataean numismatics. They are not only important to the study of Nabataean numismatics but also have considerable implications for ancient numismatics as a whole. Too, they enable us (see below, p. 51), to solve similar problems relating to Jewish coins. These issues are distinguished by the fact that their denominations are specified on the coins themselves. Because of their special significance, we shall first describe them in brief (see the Catalogue for a more detailed description).

1. No. 79.
   Obv. Head of Aretas IV r.; around, inscr. חרתת מלך נבטו רחם עמה מעה כסף (Aretas, king of the Nabataeans, the lover of his people. A silver *ma'ah*)

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125 In several instances the letter ח is written with its left stroke longer and more curved to the left than one would expect, so that it may almost be read as the monogram of queen Ḥuldu's name, as though the letters חל were combined into one letter. But since this is merely an assumption, we prefer not to base anything on it.

Rev. Bust of Ḥuldu r.; around, inscr. חלדו מלכת נבטו שנת עשר (Ḥuldu, queen of the Nabataeans. Year ten [1 C.E.] 9.35 gr., 24 mm.

A similar coin was struck in year 11 (see No. 83).

2. No. 80.

Obv. Head of Aretas IV r.; around, inscr. חרתת מלך נבטו רחם עמה (Aretas, king of the Nabataeans, the lover of his people).

Rev. Eagle standing l.; around, inscr. חצ כסף שנת 10 (A half-silver. Year 10) 5.10 gr., 19 mm.

A similar coin was struck in year 11 (see No. 84).

3. No. 81.

Obv. Head of Aretas IV r.

Rev. Wreath; within it, inscr. רבע (A quarter) 2.30 gr., 14 mm.

On coin No. 82 the inscription is רבוע. (Although this type has neither a date nor a king's name, it undoubtedly belongs to this group, particularly since one specimen has a countermark identical with that on other coins of this group; see No. 81A.)

Specifying the denomination on coins, as is done on these bronze issues, is a feature which has no other parallel in ancient numismatics except for Jewish coins of the Jewish war; in ancient times the denominations of the gold, silver, and bronze coins were clear and familiar, so that there was no need to indicate their value, which in any event fluctuated according to the source of the coin and its state of preservation.

It is evident that this is an exceptional series of coins whose values would have been unknown to their users had they not been stated specifically. We are inclined to consider this circumstance as an innovation of Aretas IV, occasioned by special conditions.

Except for two individual types, one of Aretas' thirteenth year (No. 85) and the other of his fourteenth year (No. 86), both issued apparently in very limited quantities, the real striking of silver coins by Aretas was renewed only in his sixteenth year, and then only partially. Between 4 B.C.E. (his sixth year) and 4 C.E. (his thirteenth year) there was a gap during which the minting of silver coins ceased entirely. We do not know the precise cause of this, e.g. whether it was due to some political or economic factor, but we believe that it was on account of a shortage of silver. It could be that during the years immediately after the interruption in the striking of silver coins, that is, in Aretas' seventh, eighth and ninth years, this shortage was not yet felt, since the coins from earlier years were still in circulation. But by Aretas' tenth year the supply of silver coins had apparently run out, and a severe shortage of silver currency was experienced. Since he lacked sufficient silver for striking the necessary quantity of coins, Aretas took the step, quite unusual for his day, of issuing bronze substitutes of silver coins. We suggest that this is what we have here, and not a series of bronze coins bearing specific denominations. For had Aretas intended to strike normal bronze coins, he would have had no need to designate them מעה כסף (a silver *ma'ah*) or חצ כסף (a half-silver).

Coins with their denominations specified on them are known to us only from the Middle Ages onwards, and were undoubtedly at first cases of substitution as well.[126] In the

[126] As an example of this, there are the bronze coins of the Ayyubids, struck as substitutes, on which the word dirham, the name of a silver coin current at the time, appears; see G. Edhem: *Catalogue des Monnaies Turcomanes*, Constantinople, 1894, p. 154, No. 192. Denominations are also indicated on archaic Tyrian coins, on which, however, the inscriptions are not quite clear. See also Hill, *op, cit.* (above, n. 23), p. 227, No. 1. The denominations mentioned on the shekels of the Jewish war against the Romans have apparently a different significance: see Y. Meshorer: Alterations of the 'Šeqel' Standards during the Jewish War and the Bar-Kokhba War, *Proceedings of the Fifth World Congress of Jewish Studies*, Jerusalem, 1969, pp. 81–86 (Hebrew); English Abstract, pp. 231–232.
See also BMC Caria and islands, London 1896 p. 269, nos. 416, 417.

days of Aretas, at the beginning of the first century C.E., this mention of a denomination on a coin can only be termed remarkable, since it was undoubtedly meant to indicate and emphasize this new type of minting.

The Term מעה (*Ma'ah*)

The expression מעה כסף which occurs on the coin, although unknown to us from Nabataean inscriptions, is familiar from mishnaic sources. There מעה sometimes denotes a monetary unit whose value was one twenty-fourth of a dinar; more often it indicates money or coins in general without any reference to a denomination, as in the saying: 'he has put his money (מעותיו) on a deer's horn.'[127]

The term כסף, silver, in the expresssion מעה כסף or חצי כסף was intended to stress the nature of the coins of which these were the substitute, as though stating: 'a silver (coin)' or 'a half-silver [coin].'

Another feature characteristic of these coins derives from the fact that they were substitutes of the silver coins of Aretas. Thus the bronze type of the denomination of מעה כסף (Nos. 79, 83) bears the same designs as the preceding silver coins of Aretas IV (Nos. 48, 49, 51, 52, 53, 65), and the bronze type of the denomination of חצי כסף (Nos. 80, 84), on which an eagle is depicted, bears the same designs as the small silver coins (half the usual denomination of the silver coins) which were struck earlier, in 9 B.C.E. (Nos. 40, 41). This similarity of design was another means whereby the minters reinforced the connection between the bronze substitutes and the original silver coins. The coin of the denomination of a quarter (Nos. 81, 82) was given a new, hitherto unknown design.

The only analogous instance known to us of substitution in ancient times occurred in שנת ארבע (year four) of the Jewish war against Rome, 69 C.E., when Jerusalem was besieged by the Romans and the situation in the city was grave. Bronze substitutes of the silver shekels (in the form of half shekels and quarter-shekels) were struck.[128] The denominations on these Jewish coins are stated simply as חצי (half) and רביע (quarter). The word שקל (shekel) or כסף (silver) was omitted, however, for internal religious reasons associated, apparently, with the commandment of the half-shekel.[129]

It is interesting to inquire into what happened to the silver coins of Aretas IV following the introduction into the currency of bronze substitutes.

The Fate of the Substitutes on the Nabataean Market

Among all the Nabataean issues, only these substitute coins bear countermarks, attesting the difficulties in putting the coins into circulation. From the moment these bronze substitute coins made their appearance, Nabataean merchants presumably hoarded the silver coins in their possession, for who would have been willing to exhange a real silver coin for a bronze one, even if the authorities had declared on the bronze coin itself the equivalence of their values? It is a universal phenomenon that when new coins with a lower silver content are introduced, the older, more valuable coins disppear from circulation immediately. This undoubtedly happened in Aretas' tenth year, when the bronze substitutes were put into circulation; the few silver coins still current disappeared completely from use.

While Aretas himself benefited from the introduction of these bronze coins, the Nabataeans undoubtedly tended to be suspicious of

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127 For other references to מעה (*ma'ah*) in the sense of a coin, see Ketubot xiii, 2, 5, 7; Nedarim xi, 8; Nazir iv, 6.

128 See Meshorer, *op. cit.* (above, n. 22), Nos. 161, 162.

129 *Idem, loc. cit.* (above, n. 126).

them, and their use was in no way comparable to their use of the silver coins. Although we cannot tell if the purchasing power of these types was the same as or different from that of the silver coins, we can readily conjecture that in 1 C.E. this minting was tantamount to devaluation, the exten tof which it is impossible to gauge. These coins may have established themselves as a currency in their own right, for they were issued again in Aretas' eleventh year, proof that the experiment had succeeded. They were undoubtedly in circulation during his twelfth to fifteenth years, for in his sixteenth year (7 C.E.), after a lengthy interval, a large series of silver coins was struck once more. These naturally clashed with the bronze substitute coins.

We believe that when these silver coins were introduced into the currency they were immediately hoarded, for people undoubtedly preferred to keep silver coins and to dispose of bronze, especially since they were uncertain as to whether another minting of good silver coins whould be forthcoming. And indeed, after the striking of these silver coins, apparently not in a particularly large quantity, Aretas realized that he could not continue minting them, perhaps because of the peoples' tendency to hoard them. Therefore, he had no choice but to reintroduce into the currency the substitute bronze coins and to reconfirm them as legal tender. This revalidation of the bronze coins, after the failure to introduce silver ones into the market, left its imprint in the form of countermarks overstruck apparently at the end of Aretas' sixteenth or during his seventeenth year (7–8/9 C.E.; see coins Nos. 97A, 81A, 83).

Coins of Year 24

In Aretas' twenty-fourth year another unusual series of bronze coins was struck which, unlike their predecessors, were exact copies of the silver coins, both in their inscriptions and in their diameter (see No. 95). When Hill[130] first published a coin of this type he failed to read either the date or the inscription properly, and thought the coin had been struck incorrectly or was an ancient forgery in bronze of a silver coin.[131] Unable to read the digit, Hill gave the date as year 20+, and stated accordingly that the queen was undoubtedly Shuqailat. This he did because he had at his disposal neither the chronology of Ḥuldu nor that of her successor Shuqailat, and because the latest coin bearing the name of Ḥuldu known to him was one dated '16 שנת' (year 16; No. 94).

We have been able to examine not only the coin that Hill published but also two others like it. Of these three, the best preserved is that at Cambridge.[132] The date 'year 24' can be clearly read on it, as can the name of the queen Ḥuldu. After reading the inscription on the Cambridge coin we found that both the date and the name of the queen on the British Museum coin were also legible, and when cleaned it was seen to have been struck using the same dies as the Cambridge coin. With the discovery of the two additional bronze coins, it became obvious that these coins were never meant to be struck in silver. They are essentially bronze coins, and apparently another bronze substitute for silver coins.

It is difficult to know what happened to these coins on the Nabataean market after their introduction. While their minting was clearly a temporary and limited expedient, their importance lies is the fact that they give us the latest date of the mention of Ḥuldu's name. Contrary to earlier views, it is now possible to extend the period during which she was queen by another eight years. The letter ח appears twice on coin No. 95, once on the obverse and once on the reverse, in a monogram which probably indicates the names of Aretas and Ḥuldu. In any event, in addition to being the latest coin bearing Ḥuldu's name, it is also the latest one on which the letter ח

130 Hill, *op. cit.* (above, n. 19), p. 7, No. 12, Pl. I, 20.

131 *Ibid.*, p. 7, note to coin No. 12.

132 In the Fitzwilliam Museum collection.

appears more than once. With this coin the striking of the coins of the third group came to an end. The first three groups belong to the days of Ḥuldu. Aretas IV's first wife, while the fourth group is of the days of Shuqailat, Aretas' second wife.

After the completion of this work, another bronze coin of this type was revealed yielding the date 22, which dates the beginning of the minting of this issue two years earlier (see Sup 7).

The Table summarizes the stages and changes through which the monetary system passed during the first twenty-four years of Aretas IV's reign:

Table D

Coins in Circulation during the First Twenty-Four Years of Aretas IV's Reign

Regnal Year	*Year*	*Coins*
	B.C.E.	
1	8/8	
2	8/7	Mainly silver coins, as well as a few bronze coins of Syllaeus and
3	7/6	of Obodas III.
4	6/5	
5	5/4	
6	4/3	Silver coins of the first—sixth years and new bronze coins of the
7	3/2	fourth—sixth years.
8	2/1	
9	1/	
	C.E.	
10	1/2	The hoarding of silver coins and the striking of bronze substitute coins only.
11	2/3	
12	3/4	
13	4/5	Bronze, substitute bronze, and minute bronze coins and also very
14	5/6	few silver ones in use.
15	6/7	
16	7/8	The brief introduction of silver coins into the currency and the immediate hoarding of them.
17	8/9	Countermarks struck on substitute coins.
18	9/10	Only bronze and bronze substitute coins used.
19	10/11	Minute bronze coins used.
20	11/12	
21	12/13	
22	13/14	
23	14/15	
24	15/16	Bronze coins, replicas of the silver issues, temporarily introduced into the currency.

A Coin of the City of Ḥagra (Ha-Ḥeger)

There is a rare type of coin (only a single specimen has been found so far: see No. 87) which is extremely interesting since it is the only instance in which the name of a city occurs on a Nabataean coin. Because of its importance we describe it here.

Obv. Head of Aretas IV r., with long, wavy hair hanging down to nape of the neck; in field r., ח

Rev. Unidentified object, resembling bell with fringes that look like five fingers hanging down and ending in drops; on top of object, a kind of flower or handle; below, inscr. חגרא (Ḥagra)

Ḥagra — Ha-Ḥeger in Hebrew sources, the present-day El-Ḥejra in northern Arabia — was an important city on the caravan route between Nabataea and southern Arabia. The many Nabataean finds and inscriptions discovered at El-Ḥejra reveal that its main development and importance began with the days of Aretas IV, that is, at a relatively late stage in Nabataean history, and it is quite possible that the city was founded during his reign. If this assumption is correct, it is very likely that the coin under discussion was a city foundation coin, struck to commemorate that signal event. In the ancient world such coins were very common, especially in the coinages of the Jews and of the Roman cities in the East (see, for example, the coins of Tiberias and the Neronias issues of Agrippa II).[133] As for the curious object depicted on the coin, we would like to suggest that it may be connected with the city or with some cult practised there.

That the coin belongs to the days of Aretas IV is evident not only from the portrait which appears on it and which is undoubtedly his, but also from the letter ח which occurs alongside the head. The coin was clearly struck in the first part of Aretas' reign, that is, not later than 18 C.E., during which he appears without a moustache.

The Minute Bronze Coins (Nos. 88–93; 119–122)

An unknown, neglected group in Nabataean numismatics is that of the minute coins. The average weight of these coins is slightly more than one gram, with many weighing less. The coins are generally in a poor state of preservation and in most instances their details are difficult to decipher, which may be the main reason why numismatists have neglected them. Another obstruction to the study of these coins is the comparatively large number of variations. Moreover, the coins have one basic shortcoming: they are, for the most part, minted off-centre, so that it is only in the very rare instances when the coins were properly struck that all the details can be distinguished. Accordingly, a description of this group is generally based on a reconstruction, in which the various details, preserved in part on different coins of the same type, supplement one another. It must be added, however, that comparing coins which are not from the same die is a hazardous procedure that does not necessarily produce accurate results.[134]

These minute coins may be divided into two groups, one of the days of Ḥuldu and the other of the days of Shuqailat. This distinction is based on the letters ח, for Ḥuldu and ש, for Shuqailat. We are inclined to assign the first group to a period not earlier than Aretas' tenth year, 1/2 C.E., and hence we would date it between 2 and 16 C.E. The division of the two groups according to the letters ח and ש is interesting as far as the typological division is concerned: all the coins of the earlier group, of the days of Ḥuldu, have the design of an eagle on the reverse (Nos. 88–93), while those of the later group, of the days of Shuqailat, have the head of the queen on the reverse (Nos. 119–122).

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133 See Meshorer, *op. cit.* (above, n. 22), pp. 73–75, 85–87.

134 Curiously enough, of the dozens of coins examined by us only two were found to have been struck with identical dies. How unfortunate that this should happen in the case of such problematic coins.

GROUP D

The Silver and Bronze Coins of Aretas' Twenty-Seventh—Forty-Eighth Years

The first coins of Aretas to bear the name of Shuqailat are those of the twenty-seventh year of his reign (18 C.E.; coin No. 96).

We do not know the precise year of Ḥuldu's death, whether it was in Aretas' twenty-fourth year, when the latest coin bearing her name was struck (No. 95), or whether it was a year or two later. Nor do we know if Shuqailat, as Aretas' wife, became the queen at the end of his twenty-fourth or in his twenty-fifth or twenty-sixth year, or whether it was not until his twenty-seventh year, when the earliest coin mentioning her name was struck.

It is of course possible that there was an interval between Ḥuldu's death and the date when Shuqailat became the queen. In all, there are two problematic years, of which we have neither a coin nor an inscription, and when we do not know who the Nabataean queen was, if indeed there was one. So long as no inscriptions or coins of Aretas' twenty-fifth (16 C.E.) or twenty-sixth year (17 C.E.) have been found,[135] we are clearly unable to assign the first appearance of Shuqailat to a date earlier than Aretas' twenty-seventh year (18 C.E.) when coin No. 96 was struck.

This is a rather important problem, in view of the fact that most of the coins of Aretas IV (quantitatively, not typologically) were struck in the days of Shuqailat, and that all the bronze coins are undated. Hence we can only assign these coins with any confidence to the latest of these dates, that is, 18 C.E. (on the chronology of the bronze coins, see p. 57, below).

The Silver Coins of Aretas and Shuqailat

The silver coins of Aretas and Shuqailat may be divided into two typological sub-groups, which also constitute two different chronological units.

Sub-group A (Nos. 96, 98)

This comprises the earliest silver coins of Aretas and of his second wife Shuqailat, Struck in 'שנת 27' and 'שנת 28' (year 27 and year 28; 18 and 19 C.E.), in character they still resemble the earlier silver coins of Ḥuldu. The description of coins Nos. 96 and 98 is as follows:

Obv. Laureate bust of Aretas IV r., with curly hair falling down to nape of neck, draped; around, inscr. חרתת מלך נבטו רחם עמה (Aretas, king of the Nabataeans, the lover of his people)

Rev. Laureate bust of Shuqailat r., draped and veiled, with veil descending to nape of neck; O in field; around, inscr. שקילת מלכת נבטו שנת 28 שנת / 27 (Shuqailat, queen of the Nabataeans. Year 27/Year 28).

In principle there is no difference between this type and that of Aretas and Ḥuldu (see, for example, No. 94). Except for the name of the queen, and also for the fact that these silver pieces are generally smaller in diameter than the coins of Ḥuldu, they are actually a direct continuation of those of Aretas and Ḥuldu. The connecting link between these two groups is the group of bronze coins of Aretas' twenty-fourth year (15 C.E.; No. 95) which resemble the silver issues. This circumstance is important for fixing the chronology of the coins of Aretas. We may therefore establish the principle that all the silver coins of Aretas bearing the name of Shuqailat and having only one portrait on each side (the head of the king and that of the queen) are not later than 19 C.E. or earlier than 18 C.E.[136] From his

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135 The earliest inscription which mentions Shuqailat's name is of Aretas' twenty-ninth year: see *CIS* II, 354.

136 It is theoretically possible to assume that coins of Shuqailat of 16 and 17 C.E. (Aretas' twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth years) may yet be found. On the

twenty-ninth year (20 C.E.) onwards Aretas struck a different type of silver coin (sub-group B). This principle is important, for a large percentage of the silver coins of Aretas are in poor condition, or have the inscriptions and dates off the flans, which were smaller than the diameter of the dies. We are thus able to assign a coin within defined chronological limits on the basis of its general description alone.

Sub-group B (Nos. 99–111)

The coins of this sub-group differ in form from, and are later than, those of sub-group A. The following is a description of this type.

Obv. Laureate bust of Aretas IV r., his curly hair falling down to nape of neck, draped; around, inscr. חרתת מלך נבטו רחם עמה (Aretas, king of the Nabataeans, the lover of his people)

Rev. Busts jugate of Aretas and Shuqailat r. (in foreground, Aretas without cloak; in background, Shuqailat with cloak); around, inscr. שקילת מלכת נבטו שנת 29 (Shuqailat, queen of the Nabataeans. Year 29 [up to year 48 there are 13 different dates])

Unlike the coins of subgroup A, these have the jugate busts of the king and queen depicted on their reverse. In general this feature occurs on coins of Obodas III, is discontinued from the end of 9 B.C.E. until 19 C.E., and returns in Aretas' twenty-ninth year (20 C.E.), from which date until the end of Nabataean minting it is the customary design in Nabataean numismatics. This large sub-group of silver coins was minted during most of the years between Aretas' twenty-ninth and forty-eighth years, there being only a few years, e.g., the forty-second, forty-third, and forty-fifth, which do not occur on these coins. It is possible, however, that dated issues of these years, too, will yet be found. There is really only one conspicuous numismatic gap in the striking of this series of coins, between 28 and 30 C.E., for no coins of Aretas' thirty-seventh through thirty-ninth years have been found. Since these are consecutive years this would indicate an intentional and not a chance gap. We do not know what happened specifically during the three years when Aretas stopped minting coins. But even should a coin struck in one of them be found, this particular period is yet distinguished by the absence of any regular and systematic minting. From the list on p. 46–47, in which dated coins and inscriptions of the days of Aretas are compared, we see that in these same years there are likewise no dated inscriptions. Thus the question arises whether there is a connection between these two circumstances or whether the absence of inscriptions is merely fortuitous.[137]

The Silver Content

All the dated Nabataean coins whose specific gravity we have been able to ascertain are listed in the table on p. 74. While the specific gravity of a coin is not a precise indication of its silver content and is likely in several instances to be misleading, it is nevertheless a general indication of the quality of the silver, particularly if the specific gravity of a large number of coins is taken. The general picture which emerges is that some coins have a high, and others a low, silver content.

From Table G we see that the coins of Aretas IV's early years (the first to sixth years of his reign) have a silver content which, if not very high, is still considerable, the average

basis of the data presently available, however, we are unable to assign Shuqailat's coronation to a date earlier than 18 C.E.

137 In this connection it is interesting to note that a similar interruption occurred in the minting of coins by the Roman procurators in Judaea. The coins of the procurator Valerius Gratus were struck until 24 C.E., when there was an interruption in the minting which was only renewed in Tiberius' sixteenth year, that is, in 29 C.E.

(except for two debased coins) being more than 70% silver.[138] In this respect these issues are a continuation of the group of later silver coins of Obodas III, which have a similar silver content.

An intermediate group of silver coins of Aretas' sixteenth year has a silver content much less than that of the coins of the first group, the average being about 50% silver.

The third and later group of silver coins, dating from Aretas' twenty-seventh year until the end of his reign, reveals a sharp drop in silver content. That of most of the coins of this group is between 35 and 40%, and, in individual, mostly undated, instances is even higher, while some coins which we examined (in particular the undated ones) have a very low silver content, less than 20%. These differences in the silver content of the coins of Aretas IV are extremely interesting, reflecting as they do two stages in the devaluation which took place in his days.

Numerous Nabataean silver coins dating from 20 C.E. onwards were found in the Murabba'at hoard. This led us to believe that, after that date, the earlier coins of Aretas IV (and undoubtedly the Nabataean coins prior to his reign) consisted of a high-quality silver, and hence apparently disappeared from circulation and may even have been melted down. For to use them in trading and to exchange them for the current low-content coins would not have been very sensible.

These differences in the silver content explain the complete absence from the Murabba'at hoard of the coins of Aretas IV's first to sixteenth years, although these are no rarer than his later coins, and although the hoard contained a large number of his other coins, in addition to those of Malichus II and Rabbel II. The Table (p. 74) shows that in general the silver content of the coins of these last two kings was lower than that of the later coins of Aretas. However, since the later coins of Aretas are more worn than those of his successors,[139] and since the difference in their silver content was in any event not particularly great, they may have been used as currency together with the more debased silver coins of Malichus II and Rabbel II.

The Bronze Coins of Aretas and Shuqailat

The richest and largest group in Nabataean coinage consists of the bronze coins of Aretas and Shuqailat. As they are undated we have no alternative but to date them with the help of other, in general stylistic, evidence, which by its very nature does not make for a precise dating.

For all the bronze coins bearing the inscription Shuqailat there is one decisive date, and that is 18 C.E., the earliest possible date of their appearance (see p. 55). Thereafter until 40 C.E. bronze coins were struck in large quantities. We shall endeavour to suggest an approximate chronology for the various sub-types.

There is an unusual group of coins (No. 97) which constitutes an innovation in Nabataean numismatics and was apparently struck immediately after Shuqailat's coronation. Its description is as follows:

Obv. Aretas IV, laureate, standing to front as soldier, looking l., holding spear in r. hand and supporting with l. sword in scabbard attached to girdle, his hair falling onto nape of neck; in field on l., palm branch, on r. monogram.

Rev. Shuqailat standing l., veiled, wearing long robe, raising r. hand with palm extended; in field on l., wreath,

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138 The specific gravity of coin No. 48, which is of Aretas' first year, is the same as that of a bronze coin, and it may therefore have been silvered. Because of its rarity, we did not wish to spoil the coin nor did we test it in any other way to ascertain the real metal of which it is made.

139 Worn coins were depreciated in ancient times. See, for example, Bava Metzi'a 51B–52a.

on r., in three lines, inscr. שק/יל/ת (Shuqa/ila/t)

This coin is interesting for several reasons. Depicted here for the first time is the full figure of a Nabataean king, dressed apparently in a military uniform consisting of a cuirass and a coat of mail. Tied around his neck is a kind of caffya, fluttering in the wind. The inscription חר (after deciphering the monogram), standing for Aretas' name, indicates who the figure is. The conspicuous element alongside the king is the palm-branch which occurs here for the second and last time in Nabataean numismatics, the first time being on coins of Phasael (see p. 48). It was suggested that on those coins the palm-branch was associated with Phasael's birth. In the present instance, too, the palm-branch seems to be connected with a personal event of importance in Aretas' life, namely his marriage to Shuqailat, his second wife, and her coronation.

This series of coins is unique not only in its designs but also in its execution. The coins are small, comparatively thick, and well made. On the reverse of the coins, the queen Shuqailat is depicted exactly as her predecessor Ḥuldu is on the bronze coins of Aretas of 6–4 B.C.E. (Nos. 54, 55, 56, 58, 60, 66), but, whereas Ḥuldu's name is not mentioned, that of Shuqailat is, to make it quite clear that the figure on the coin was the new queen Shuqailat.

The fact that her name is emphasized in this way on the coins indicates, we believe, that its date is close to Shuqailat's coronation, which is associated in some special way with the wreath on the left (a royal wreath?).

All the features which distinguish these coins from the other issues of Aretas are, we suggest, characteristic of an extremely limited period, extending from 18 to 20 C.E., during Shuqailat's first years as queen. Their denomination is half that of the larger bronze coins, which were struck from this time until the end of the days of Aretas IV.

The 'Whole' Bronze Coins, Nos. 112–114B

Among the bronze coins of Aretas and Shuqailat are three denominations which we have designated 'whole', 'half' and 'quarter'. The general description of the 'whole' bronze coin is as follows:

Obv. Jugate busts r. of Aretas IV and Shuqailat, the king laureate, with moustache, and with hair hanging down to nape of neck; in field on r., ש, on l., ח; sometimes, above their heads, inscr. שלם (= whole), in full or in a monogram

Rev. Two cornucopiae crossed; between them, above and below, in three lines, inscr. חרתת/שקי/לת (Aretas/ Shuqai/lat)

This type of coin may be roughly subdivided into two chronological groups.

1) Group One (Nos. 112–113). In this, the earlier group, the coins are generally more beautiful and struck on larger, flatter flans. Above the heads of the king and queen is the legible inscription שלם (= whole) either in full or in monogram. This group is apparently the archetype of all other similar coins, having been struck, it seems, during Shuqailat's early years as queen, in about 18–25 C.E.

2) Group Two (No. 114). This is the larger later group. The coins differ from those in the former group in that they are without the inscription above the heads of the king and the queen, are generally less delicately made, and, even though they tend to have a smaller diameter, do not weigh less. We are inclined to regard them as a kind of routine continuation of the former coins minted at a time when the inscription שלם (= whole) was no longer important, since the relation of this coin to others in the Nabataean currency was generally well known. The commonest of the Nabataean issues, these coins were apparently intensively minted between 25 and 40 C.E. and perhaps even somewhat earlier.

The Meaning of the Inscription שלם

We believe that the word שלם (whole) signifies the denomination of the coin. As we have seen (p. 49), there was in Aretas' tenth to twenty-fourth years (1–15 C.E.) confusion about the various denominations of the bronze coins because of the introduction into the currency of bronze substitutes of silver coins. But from Aretas' twenty-seventh year (18 C.E.) silver coins were regularly put into circulation and there was, accordingly, no further need of bronze substitutes. The position of the coins in circulation became normal, with silver representing silver, and bronze bronze. When these new bronze coins, different in size from their predecessor and, especially from those of Aretas' tenth to eleventh years, were introduced into the currency, the minters found it necessary to add the word שלם (whole) on the main bronze coin under discussion here. This was apparently to indicate that it was the principal denomination of the new bronze coins and that the other two denominations, a half–שלם (Nos. 115–118) and a quarter – שלם (Nos. 119–122), issued at the time, related to it and not to the earlier coins.

The Letters

On these coins (Nos. 112–114) the letters ש ח occur regularly and always in the same order. Of the hundreds of coins of this type that we examined, not a single one has the letters in a different order. Since the busts of Aretas and of Shuqailat occur on the same side of the coin as these letters, with the king always on the left next to the letter ח and the queen invariably on the right next to the letter ש, it seems that the letters are intended to denote the names of the royal persons alongside them.

The Denominations of the Small Bronze Coins

The Medium-Sized Coins (Nos. 115–118)

Coins of a denomination similar to those which have Shuqailat's portrait on them, and which are half the denomination of the 'whole' ones (see No. 97; and p. 57, above), continued to be struck in Shuqailat's ensuing years as well. These were a continuation of coins of the same denomination, issued in large numbers in the days of Ḥuldu, on which Aretas' head appears on the obverse and two cornucopiae crossed (with various letters and marks) on the reverse (Nos. 67–68). The great quantity of these coins struck in the days of Ḥuldu explains their comparative rarity in the reign of Shuqailat, who preferred instead to issue coins of double the denomination (Nos. 112–114).

In principle no change took place in this group of coins in the days of Shuqailat, except that the letter ח denoting Ḥuldu was replaced by ש for Shuqailat (except for No. 115, which has no ש but only a ח for Aretas), and, in a new type of this group (No. 118) a pomegranate replaced the former caduceus between two crossed cornucopiae (Nos. 75, 76). It is interesting to note that, apart from the coins of the Hasmonaeans, this is the only other instance in numismatics in which a pomegranate occurs between a double cornucopiae.

The Minute Coins (Nos. 119–122)

The denomination of a quarter of the 'whole' bronze coins, although unknown to earlier numismatists and first published only in 1936,[140] is in fact not rare. It is perhaps because of their generally poor state of preservation, or because of the little attention paid them in the past, that the minute coins remained unknown for so long and have hitherto not been fully discussed.

These coins were first issued as early as the days of Ḥuldu. In the days of Shuqailat the marks and letters were changed, with ש ap-

140 See Robinson, *op. cit.* (above, n. 20), Nos. 4, 5.

pearing instead of ח. Interestingly enough all the minute coins bearing the letter ח have the design of an eagle on the reverse (Nos. 88–93), whereas those with the letter ש have the queen's head on their reverse. Aretas IV may have wanted to distinguish between the two minting periods by changing the designs on these coins.

Nevertheless, doubts must still remain about the precise difference between the minute coins of Ḥuldu and Shuqailat, until the discovery of additional, clearer coins. We do not know when the minute coins of Shuqailat were struck, during the whole or part of the period when she was queen, and, if the latter, whether at an early or a late stage of that period. It should be noted that no chronological significance attaches to the fact that we have left a description of this type to the end of our discussion of the coins of Aretas and Shuqailat.

The Inscriptions [141]

The following are the inscriptions on the coins of Aretas IV in the chronological order of their occurrence.

1. חרתת מלכא מלך נבטו (Aretas the king, king of the Nabataeans): No. 46.

2. חרתת מלך נבטו (Aretas, king of the Nabataeans): Nos. 47, 47A, 50, 54–56, 58, 59, 66.

3. חרתת מלך נבטו רחם עמה (Aretas, king of the Nabataeans, the lover of his people): Nos. 48–54, 60, 65, 79, 79A, 80, 83–86, 94–96, 98–111.

4. חלדו מלכת נבטו (Ḥuldu, queen of the Nabataeans): Nos. 48–53, 65, 79, 79A, 83, 85, 86, 94, 94A, 95.

5. פצאל (Phasael): No. 61.

6. מעה כסף (silver *ma'ah*): Nos. 79, 79A, 83.

7. חצ כסף (half silver): Nos. 80, 84.

8. רבע (quarter): Nos. 81, 81A.

9. רבוע (quarter): No. 82.

10. חגרא (Ḥagra): No. 87.

11. שקילת מלכת נבטו (Shuqailat, queen of the Nabataeans): Nos. 96, 98–111.

12. שקילת (Shuqailat): No. 97.

13. שלם (whole): No. 112.

14. חרתת שקילת (Aretas Shuqailat): Nos. 112–114B.

15. חרתת (Aretas): No. 115.

As a rule, the silver coins have longer inscriptions than the bronze ones. There are a number of exceptions to this rule among the bronze coins, caused apparently by some unusual circumstance, but only three exceptions among the silver coins (Nos. 47, 50, 53), owing perhaps to some historical reason.

In the first sub-group of the silver coins of the first year (Nos. 47, 47A) the king's name occurs without the title רחם עמה (the lover of his people). It appears for the first time with this title on the coins of the second sub-group of that year (Nos. 49, 49A). The question thus arises whether there are grounds for assuming that at the beginning of his reign Aretas IV did not as yet have this title. (We shall later [p. 72] come across a similar circumstance in connection with the coins of Rabbel II.) It is quite clear that the title had some importance, as it does appear regularly in inscriptions.[142]

The bronze coins on which the title רחם עמה (the lover of his people) occurs after the king's name are different in character from the usual bronze coins, as though their importance justified or required the addition of the title. The first bronze coin to have this title is No. 60, struck, as we have suggested, on the occasion of Phasael's birth. In contrast to the other bronze issues of this type, which have neither the title nor the inscription פצ[אל] (Phasa[el]: Nos. 54–58, 66), the title רחם עמה has been added here, to show that this is not a usual coin but one that has a special significance (see pp. 44, above). The next time the title occurs on the bronze coins of Aretas is on those of his tenth and eleventh years, coins

141 We deal here only with the inscriptions, leaving for elsewhere a discussion of the dates and special signs.

142 See, for example, *CIS*, II, 201, 202, 204, 205.

which bear the denominations מעה כסף (a silver *ma'ah*: Nos. 79, 79A, 83) and חצ כסף (a half-silver: Nos. 80, 84). Since these are, as we have seen (p. 48), substitutes for silver coins, they had to have the king's name and title on them in full, just like the silver coins.

The inscriptions חלדו מלכת נבטו (Ḥuldu, queen of the Nabataeans) and שקילת מלכת נבטו (Shuqailat, queen of the Nabataeans), which occur on the coins of Aretas IV, have two features in common. Not only are the queens accorded no additional titles, but the absence on the coins of the title אחת (= sister), given to these two queens in other, non-numismatic inscriptions, is conspicuous.[143] The earliest mention of this title is in an inscription found at Puteoli in Italy[144] and dating apparently from 2 C.E.:[145]

line 3: [על חיי חרתת מלך נ[בטו ודי . . .
. . . for the life of Aretas, king of the Na[bataeans, and of]

line 4: [ח]לדו אחתה מלכת נבטו ודי בניהם בירח אב שנת 11
[Ḥu]ldu his sister, queen of the Nabataeans, and of their children, in the month of Av in the year 11 . . .

The corresponding reference relating to Shuqailat is contained in an inscription of 20 C.E. found in the vicinity of Petra.[146] While the name of Shuqailat is missing, the reconstruction is indisputable because of the clear date:

line 2: . . . על חיי חרתת מלך נבטו רחם עמ[ה ושקילת]
. . . for the life of Aretas, king of the Nabataeans, the lover of [his] people, [and Shuqailat]

line 3: [א]חתה מלכת נבטו ומלכו ועבדת ורבאל ופצאל ושעודת וחגרו בנוהי וחרתת בר הג[רו ברברה]
his sister, queen of the Nabataeans, and Malichus and Obodas and Rabbel and Phasael and Se'udat and Hagru his children, and Aretas the son of Hag[ru . . .]

line 4: [בירח . . . שנ]ת 3 III III III לחרתת מלך נבטו רחם עמה
[in the month of . . . the yea]r 29 of Aretas, king of the Nabataeans, the lover of his people

What is the meaning of the title אחת (= sister)?[147] According to the interpretation of earlier scholars, who have taken this title literally as denoting Aretas' actual sister, the king first married his sister Ḥuldu and then, after her death, another sister of his, Shuqailat. We find it difficult, however, to interpret this title literally, since various Nabataean inscriptions lead us to adopt a different view, or at least to challenge the old one. Analogous titles in other inscriptions suggest that this one may be a rank in the hierarchy of the Nabataean royal court.

The inscription of Syllaeus found at Miletus (see p. 37, above) states that he was אח מלכא which means, literally, the brother of the king, that is, of king Obodas III. Not only is he nowhere referred to in the sources as the actual brother of Obodas, but the same inscription mentions Syllaeus' father, Teimu. Since Obodas III's father was Malichus and not Teimu, it is evident that the title of Syllaeus does not refer to a family relationship but to a rank.[148] And, indeed, we know that

143 On the other hand, on the coins of Malichus II (see pp. 64–65, below), his wife Shuqailat (II) is called אחתה (his sister).

144 *CIS*, II, 158.

145 The date is only partially correct, for while the numerals 10 and 1 are clear, there may have been one or two more units, so that the date could be year 11, 12, or 13.

146 *CIS*, II, 354.

147 This is briefly referred to by Cooke, *op. cit.* (above, n. 8), p. 246.

148 Had Syllaeus actually been the brother of Obodas III, this would surely have been known to Josephus or to Nicolaus of Damascus, both of whom wrote about him, or even to Strabo.

Syllaeus was invested with high authority in the court of Obodas III.

Another inscription mentions ענישו אח שקילת מלכת נבטו [149] ('Unaishu, the brother of Shuqailat, queen of the Nabataeans). 'Unaishu, unknown to us from the list of the Nabataean royal family, apparently also held a distinguished position at court.

It is clearly impossible to decide definitely in favour of this 'hierarchical' view. We wish to show at least that the title is open to both interpretations, and that it should not be taken for granted that the Nabataean king married his actual sister.

The Letters

The inscriptions on the coins of Aretas IV represent an intermediate epigraphic stage. While not uniform in structure, the letters no longer exhibit 'archaic' elements as those on the coins of Obodas II and of Malichus I. Yet they do not have the later features, such as are found on the coins of Rabbel II. In this respect the letters are classic ones and, because of the enormous quantity of coins, include a large number of variants.

Notes on the Typological Table of Letters (Pl. 83)

א: Having passed the ancient stage and resembling in the main the *aleph* on the coins of Obodas III, the characteristic Nabataean א is closed at the top.

ב: At this period the *bet* has a flatter, more oblique form than the earlier ones.

ג: Occurs for the first time in Nabataean numismatics on a coin of Aretas IV, and then only once on the unique coin No. 87; later it appears in the same, as well as in different shapes, on coins of Rabbel II.

ד: Has a large number of different forms and numerous variations under various kings; it is accordingly difficult to decide which is earlier and which later, or to determine the trend of development from one form to another.

ה: Occurs for the first time on the coins of Aretas IV in several different forms.

ו: Found in various forms on the coins of different kings; what has been said of the letter ד holds good here, too.

ז: Is the only letter which does not occur in Nabataean numismatics.

ח: Occurs in a uniform shape throughout.

ט: Tends to be higher and narrower on the coins of Aretas IV in contrast to the broad, flat ט on the coins of Obodas II and Malichus I; inclines to roundness on the coins of Obodas III, and generally to assume a triangular form on those of Aretas IV.

י: Appears in different forms under various kings, with no particular trend of development from one form to another.

כ: What applies to the letter י holds true generally of כ, except that more often under Aretas IV than under the other kings the upper stroke of this letter is noticeably concave.

ך: Tends to disappear after Aretas IV. On the few coins on which this final letter can be distinguished, it looks in every respect like an ordinary כ. The final ך of Aretas is identical with that of his predecessors, giving the impression of consistency.

ל: Persists in its basic form throughout the whole period of Nabataean minting.

מ: Undergoes considerable changes under the various kings, assuming on the coins of Aretas IV a form intermediate between the earlier one (on the coins of Obodas II, Malichus I, and Aretas III) and the later, that on the coins of Rabbel II, on which it has an entirely different shape.

ם: On only some of the coins of Aretas IV is there a clear distinction between the ordinary מ and the final ם. Under the other kings, such as Rabbel, this distinction may be hinted at, but is not clearly discernible.

נ: Generally preserves its shape throughout,

149 *CIS*, II, 351.

except that from the days of Aretas IV onwards it tends to become slightly shorter, a feature which begins somewhat inconspicuously already on the coins of Aretas and is particularly noticeable only on the coins of Malichus II and Rabbel II.

ן: A rare letter which occurs only on the coins of Obodas II and Obodas III, in an identical form, in the word תרתין (two).

ס: Occurs only under Aretas IV in a uniform shape.

ע: Is higher on the coins of Aretas IV than on those of his predecessors, and its upright stroke is sometimes slightly bent unlike all earlier instances. After Aretas IV it no longer occurs.

פ: Occurring only under Aretas IV, it has the same form at the beginning and end of a word, evidence that there was no final פ.

צ: Occurs only under Aretas IV, with the same form at both the beginning and end of a word, proof that there was no final צ.

ק: Occurring only from the days of Aretas IV onwards, it retains its form throughout the subsequent period.

ר: In the days of Aretas it resembles the letter on the preceding Nabataean coins, but it changes considerably after his days.

ש: Tends from Aretas IV onwards to be lower and flatter, although retaining its general shape throughout.

ת: Has a very large number of variant forms, yet preserves its character and form during the entire period of Nabataean minting.

IX. THE COINS OF MALICHUS II, 40—70 C.E.

Although Malichus II reigned over the Nabataean kingdom for 31 years, very little is known about him or about the Nabataeans during his rule. Nor do the ancient historical sources make more than a brief reference to him. Josephus mentions him but once, in describing the armies assembled at Acre in 67 C.E. under the command of Vespasian and Titus (immediately after the latter's arrival in the country) to fight the Jews in the Jewish war against the Romans. He states that, besides the Roman army itself, there were the auxiliary forces of the vassal kings of the region, Antiochus king of Commagene, Agrippa II, Soemus king of Emesa, and 'the Arab Malchus', who 'sent a thousand cavalry and five thousand infantry, mainly bowmen'.[150] This is not to be interpreted as meaning that a state of war or even a conflict existed at the time between the Nabataeans and the Jews, but is rather to be explained as a political act prompted by the relations between the Nabataeans and the Romans. Agrippa II, as we see, also dispatched an auxiliary force to fight alongside the Romans against his fellow-countrymen. But it was not only through military help which he gave to the Romans that Malichus II's political dependence on Rome and his inferior status were expressed. They are also hinted at by another interesting circumstance of about the same time.

Following the reign of Aretas III in the days of Tigranes, king of Armenia (as in those of Cleopatra, Augustus, and Tiberius), the city of Damascus continued to issue coins independently. For during all these years Damascus was a city enjoying internal autonomy, albeit under Roman protection. After the days of Tiberius the minting of autonomous coins ceased in Damascus until 62 C.E., when coins were again struck there by Nero. To

150 *BJ*, III, 68.

this fact is to be added an interesting point mentioned in the New Testament.[151] Describing what happened to him in Damascus, Paul says, 'In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me: and through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands'. Thus we see that in the days of Aretas IV Damascus was part of the Nabataean kingdom, and hence it is not surprising that during this period no autonomous coins bearing the portraits of Gaius and of Claudius were struck there. The renewed minting in the days of Nero (in 62 C.E.) shows that the city was again liberated from the rule of the Nabataeans and that the Nabataean kingdom accordingly suffered a political decline under Malichus II.

Malichus' political weakness seems to be reflected in an inscription from Hebran in the region of Ḥauran.[152] Although in Nabataean, its date is according to the regnal years of Claudius — 'year seven of the emperor Claudius' (47 C.E.) — which may mean that the region of Ḥauran was no longer a part of the Nabataean kingdom, but had reverted after Agrippa I's death (44 C.E.) to the direct rule of the Romans.

The Dated Inscriptions

The following are all the dated Nabataean inscriptions that refer to Malichus II and that constitute the principal extant material on him.

1. Inscription from Umm er-Reṣaṣ:[153] בשנת 1 למלכו [מלכ]א מלך נבטו (in year 1 of Malichus the [king], king of the Nabataeans) (40 C.E.).

2. Inscription from El-Ḥejra:[154] שנת חדה למלכו מלכא (year one of Malichus the king)[155] (40 C.E.).

3. Inscription from El-Ḥejra:[156] ביום 3 באב שנת תלת למל[כו] מלכא מלך נבטו (on Av 3, year three of Mali[chus] the king, king of the Nabataeans) (42 C.E.).

4. Inscription from Qaṣr el-Bint:[157] בשנת תשע למלכו מלכא מלך נבטו (in year nine of Malichus the king, king of the Nabataeans) (48 C.E.).

5. Inscription from El-Ḥejra:[158] בירח אדר שנת עשר וחדה למלכו מלכא מלך נבטו (in the month of Adar, year eleven of Malichus the king, king of the Nabataeans) (50/51 C.E.).

6. Inscription from El-Ḥejra:[159] בשנת 11 למלכו מלכא (in year 11 of Malichus the king) (50 C.E.).

7. Inscription from El-Ḥejra:[160] בשנת 17 למלכו (in year 17 of Malichus) (56 C.E.).

8. Inscription from Salḥad:[161] בירח אב שנת עשר ושבע למלכו מלך נבטו בר חרתת מלך נבטו רח[ם] עמה (in the month of Av, year seventeen of Malichus, king of the Nabataeans, the son of Aretas, king of the Nabataeans, the love[r of] his people) (56 C.E.).

9. Inscription from El-Ḥejra:[162] בשנת עשרין וחדה למלכו מלכא מלך נבט[ו] (in year twenty-one of Malichus the king, king of the Nabat[aeans]) (60 C.E.).

10. Inscription from Salḥad on a statue of Ba'al-shamem:[163] בשנת 31 למלכו מלכא מלך

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151 2 Corinthians 11:32–33.

152 *CIS*, II, 170.

153 *Ibid.*, II, 195. Other inscriptions found in the Ḥauran region have not, because of their lack of dates, been included here.

154 *Ibid.*, II, 218.

155 The suggestion that this is an inscription of Malichus III, the son of Rabbel II, is untenable. On this, see Cooke, *op. cit.* (above, n. 8), p. 239; and see also Hill, *op. cit.* (above, n. 19), p. xx. The expression אלה רבאל (the god Rabbel) mentioned in the inscription refers to the god Rabbel, from whom Rabbel I's name was derived.

156 *CIS*, II, 219.

157 *Ibid.* II, 220.

158 *Ibid.* II, 221.

159 *Ibid.* II, 174

160 *Ibid.* II, 222.

161 *Ibid.* II, 182.

162 *Ibid.* II, 223.

163 E. Littmann: *Semitic Inscriptions*, Leyden, 1914, Section A, Nabataean Inscriptions, No. 23.

נבטו[ת] (in year 31 of Malichus the king, king of the Nabat[aeans]) (70 C.E.).

The final inscription is especially important, since it mentions the last year of Malichus II's reign. It should be added that in our view the copy of the inscription shows very clearly that the date mentioned in it is to be read 'year 31' and not 'year 33' as is usually done.

The seventh line of the inscription has למלכו לא"ו, that is, first the numeral 20, then 10, and finally 1. Between the numeral 1 and the following word למלכו there is a small rectangle, which has been read as two additional strokes. But this is quite unacceptable, since units cannot be so short, especially as the first unit is of the normal length and by comparison very long. This small rectangle may be a defect in the stone or a dash between the date and the king's name. In any event, we have no doubt about the reading '31'.[164]

The Numismatic Evidence

Malichus II struck only two main types of coins: his silver coins, which are a continuation of those of Aretas IV and his two wives Ḥuldu and Shuqailat (Nos. 48–54, 65, 85, 86, 94–96, 98); and his bronze coins, which follow the pattern of type No. 114 of Aretas IV. There is one exception, however, a rare tiny bronze coin (No. 141).

The Silver Coins

There is no difference between the silver coins of Malichus II struck at the beginning and at the end of his reign. All have a uniform shape, and only the dates distinguish one from another. The following is a description of the general silver type.

Obv. Laureate bust of Malichus II r., with hair hanging down to nape of neck; around, inscr. (beginning at bottom r. מלכו מלכא מלך נבטו שנת . . .[165] (Malichus the king, king of the Nabataeans. Year . . .)

Rev. Veiled bust of Shuqailat II r., the veil falling on to her shoulders; at times wearing ornament on front of hair and earring; around, inscr. (beginning at bottom r.) שקילת אחתה מלכת נבטו (Shuqailat, his sister, queen of the Nabataeans) Av. weight 3.37 gr.

It is difficult to discern any difference in artistic style between the coins of Malichus' first and last years. Generally, however, it may be said that in the standard of its execution and in its artistic style the group of silver coins of Malichus falls between the relatively beautiful coins of Aretas IV and the clumsy issues of Rabbel II (see p. 72, below). The average diameter of the coins of Malichus II is smaller than that of the coins of Aretas IV, and their weight is more or less stable, especially when compared to the coins of his succeessor Rabbel II.

While the coins of Malichus II are comparatively rare, even more rare are those on which the date is clearly legible. In fact the principal certain numismatic evidence we have about this king comes from the Murabba'at hoard, published by Father Milik and H. Seyrig,[166] which contained 30 coins of Malichus II. On only eight of these the date can be confidently deciphered, on ten it is rec-

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164 Cantineau, *op. cit.* (above, n. 4), II, p. 19, realizing the difficulty created by so late a date in Malichus II's reign, suggested that there was a fundamental mistake in the inscription, and hence made no attempt to emend the reading.

165 The name מלכו (Malichus) is frequently read by scholars as מנכו (Manichus?); see, for example, Milik, *op. cit.* (above, n. 21), p. 19. The Nabataean ל undoubtedly greatly resembles the letter נ, particularly in cursive writing, the main difference between them lying in their length, the ל being longer. Especially in later Nabataean coins is there a tendency to shorten the letters and to give them a cursive form, so that the ל and the נ look much alike. But this is not a sufficient reason for reading מנכו instead of מלכו, at least as far as the coins are concerned.

166 Milik and Seyrig, *op. cit.* (above, n. 21), pp. 11–26.

ognizable but not entirely clear, and on twelve it is quite illegible. This ratio between the clear and the unclear coins of Malichus II is also maintained in his other issues not included in this hoard.

From the days of Shuqailat I (see p. 55, above) the diameter of the Nabataean silver coins tends to become progressively smaller, but this, curiously enough, applies only to the flan and not to the die. It is consequently almost impossible to find a coin which has both the entire design and the whole inscription on it. In many instances a coin has only the bust of the king or the queen, without any trace of the inscription, which is off the flan.

The following table lists the regnal years of Malichus II. for which we have dated silver coins.

Table E

Minting of Silver Coins under Malichus II

Year C. E.	*Regnal Year*	*Dated Nabataean Inscription(s)*
40/41	1	two
41/42	2(d)	
42/43	3	one
43/44	4	
44/45	5(d)	
45/46	6	
46/47	7	
47/48	8(sd)	
48/49	9	one
49/50	10	
50/51	11(sd)	two
51/52		
52/53	13	
53/54		
54/55	15	
55/56	16	
56/57	17	two
57/58		
58/59		
59/60	20(d)	
60/61	21(d)	one
61/62	22	
62/63	23	
63/64		
64/65		
65/66		
66/67		
67/68		
68/69		
69/70		
70		one

d = doubtful sd = somewhat doubtful

As can be seen from table E, there was a continuous minting from Malichus II's first to twenty-third years, except for two brief intervals in 51–53 C.E. and 57–58 C.E. Dated coins of his twelfth, thirteenth, fourteenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth years presumably will yet be found, as will also clearer ones than the doubtful specimens of some years. We are inclined to regard Malichus' first twenty-three years as those in which the Nabataean mint regularly issued coins. However, the complete absence of coins from his twenty-fourth year until the end of his reign (in his thirty-first year), i.e., 63–70 C.E., seems to be no accident, but rather the result of a shortage of silver, or perhaps even of a grave political crisis which prevented the Nabataean king from striking coins. We refer naturally to the dated silver coins. Whether the minting of the bronze coins also ceased in 63 C.E. or continued during 63–70 C.E. is not known.

The Cessation of Minting in 63–70 C.E.: Its Significance

We wish to return to the subject of the autonomous Damascus coins (see p. 63). As we have seen, minting was interrupted during the days of Aretas IV when the city once more came into the possession of the Nabataeans. From numismatic evidence we learn that 'city coins' were once again issued in Damascus under the emperor Nero, most of whose coins bear the date ZOT = 377.[167] This era of Damascus is according to the Seleucid era, which began in 312 B.C.E., and hence these coins are of the year 64/65 C.E.[168] Here we have an interesting numismatic circumstance. Damascus minting was renewed shortly after the cessation of Nabataean minting. These Damascus issues were probably not meant to replace the Nabataean coins of Malichus II, especially since they are of bronze and not of silver, and were merely 'city coins.' Yet there is doubtless a connection between the cessation of Nabataean minting eight years before the death of Malichus II and the renewal of Damascus minting soon after that interruption. In 63 C.E., a political change apparently took place in the Nabataean kingdom, perhaps chiefly in its relations with, or in its obligations to Rome her. This political change must have been detrimental to the Nabataeans, for in that year they were deprived of the city of Damascus — which had until then been under their rule, and the Nabataean mint also probably ceased to operate, owncе to the crisis which led to the loss of the city and which appears to have had economic implications.

The Silver Content of the Coins of Malichus II

A numismatic aspect of the political decline of the Nabataean kingdom is the silver content of the coins of Malichus II. We examined the specific gravity of some 20 of his coins, and found that they are extremely debased as far as silver content is concerned. The best coin is one in the British Museum which dates from Malichus' ninth year, the silver content of which is 42%. A coin of his third year, in the National Museum, Berlin, has a silver content of 40.5%. However, several coins in the British Museum and in other collections, as well as 11 coins of Malichus' first to twenty-first years found in the Murabba'at hoard, have a very low silver content of not more than 20% silver. Even compared with the later coins of Aretas IV, they clearly represent a sharp drop in the quantity of silver used. Only a few coins have a silver content of about 40%, the vast majority containing not more than 20%, and many much less.

The Bronze Coins (Nos. 140–141)

The numerous designs and types, as well as the various denominations, which had charac-

167 Wroth, *op. cit.* (above, n. 35), p. 283, Nos. 6, 7.

168 We have seen another coin which apparently has the date COT, and if this is so, the minting in Damascus may have been renewed already in 63/4 C.E.

terized the reign of Aretas IV now disappeared completely. As evidenced by the Kadman Museum hoard,[169] however, the coins of Aretas IV continued to circulate in the days of Malichus II and of his successor Rabbel II. With the exception of a limited series of tiny coins, of which only one unique specimen is known (No. 141), Malichus II struck only a single type in bronze (No. 140), and even this type, while not rare, is not particularly numerous. The following is a description of this type:

Obv. Jugate heads of Malichus II and Shuqailat II r. (head of king in foreground, of queen in background), both laureate, the king wearing V-shaped ornament above forehead,[170] his hair falling down to nape of neck; in field letters ש, for Shuqailat, on r., and מ, for Malichus, on l.; most coins of this type (No. 140A) are without these letters.

Rev. Two cornucopiae crossed (ornamented and filleted); between them, above and below, inscr.
מלכו (Malichus)
שקי (Shuqai)
לת (lat)

Although, as previously mentioned, this type of coin was struck earlier by Aretas IV in considerable quantities (Nos. 112–114) and subsequently also by Rabbel II (Nos. 146, 162–164), that of Malichus II is different in character. The coins of Aretas IV are generally large (average diameter: 18 mm), and their letters are big and thick; those of Malichus II are smaller (average diameter: 15 mm) and lighter (average weight: 2.34 gr. versus 4.16 gr. of similar coins of Aretas IV; see table below), their letters are thinner and smaller, and the striking itself is lighter.

It is evident from the table below that the average weight of these bronze coins of Malichus II is about half that of the corresponding coins of Aretas IV, and slightly less even than that of the coins of his son Rabbel II.

The decline of the Nabataean kingdom under Malichus II, especially in the political sphere, also resulted in the use of a reduced amount of bronze in his coins. The connection between the degenerate coins and the diminished kingdom is all the more conspicuous in view of the political recovery which took place in the days of Rabbel II and which brought in its wake an increase in the weight of the bronze coins.

The following table compares the weights of the bronze coins of Aretas IV, Malichus II, and Rabbel II, of the general type on which are depicted jugate busts and two cornucopiae (Nos. 112–114, 140, 146, 162–164; for an explanation of the abbreviations, see p. 84; it should be noted that the weights have been taken not only from coins mentioned in the Catalogue).

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169 The Kadman Numismatic Museum, Tel Aviv, has a hoard of almost 800 Nabataean bronze coins, including small and medium-sized ones of the days of Aretas II, Obodas III, Aretas IV, Malichus II, and Rabbel II.

170 As we also find in the coins of Aretas IV. In several instances in Nabataean art there occurs this ornamentation which is a kind of conventional representation of the cornucopiae, so prevalent among the Nabataeans.

Table F

Comparison of weights of Nabataean Bronge Coins

	Aretas IV (*Shuqailat I*)	*Malichus II* (*Shuqailat II*)	*Rabbel II* (*Shuqailat II*)	*Rabbel II* (*Gamilat*)	*Rabbel II* (*Hagru*)
1.	3.18 (BM)	1.71 (H)	2.16 (L)	1.77 (H)	2.21 (ROS)
2.	3.27 (B)	1.99 (ASH)	2.22 (H)	2.20 (H)	2.80 (HU)
3.	3.82 (B)	2.19 (CDM)	2.35 (H)	2.22 (BM)	2.85 (MR)
4.	3.90 (B)	2.21 (H)	2.40 (KAD)	2.45 (H)	2.96 (ANS)
5.	4.16 (B)	2.37 (H)	2.49 (HU)	2.53 (BM)	3.04 (RUD)
6.	4.21 (B)	2.49 (H)	2.51 (KAD)	2.85 (H)	3.61 (K)
7.	4.31 (B)	2.52 (BM)	2.53 (H)	3.17 (H)	3.69 (K)
8.	4.70 (B)	2.64 (H)	2.59 (BM)	3.20 (H)	
9.	4.81 (BM)	2.74 (BM)	2.61 (CDM)	3.36 (BM)	
10.	5.32 (B)	2.77 (H)	2.75 (H)	3.78 (BM)	
Av.	4.16 gr.	2.34 gr.	2.46 gr.	2.75 gr.	3.02 gr

The Tiny Bronze Coins (No. 141)

The following is a description of this coin:

Obv. Head (bust?) of Malichus II r., his hair descending to nape of neck; in field r., מ

Rev. Laurel wreath, ending above in V-shaped ornamentation, as in the laurel wreaths of Aretas IV and his wives; within wreath, inscr. מלכו (Malichus)

This type of coin, which is in all probabiltiy half the denomination of the bronze coins, was apparently minted in an extremely limited quantity (at the beginning of Malichus II's reign?). What is interesting about it is that, contrary to all the other coins of Malichus II, only the king's head (bust?) and not that of the queen is depicted on it, apparently due to the tiny size of the coin. In this respect it resembles the small coins of the denomination of a half struck by his father Aretas IV (Nos. 61A–64A, 67–78, 115–118).

This is without doubt a coin of Malichus II, for the king's portrait is identical with his and in no way resembles the head of Malichus I. The design on the reverse of the coin is like that on the type of Aretas IV (No. 115) on which the name of the king likewise occurs inside a wreath. The only question centres round its denomination. It is not clear whether the denomination of the coin is half, or less than half, that of the bronze coins of Malichus II. Since all the coins of Malichus II are of a low weight, this coin, despite its diminutive size, may nevertheless be of the usual half denomination. This is a question which will be solved only when more coins of this type are found. But a curious fact about the hoard of Nabataean coins in the Kadman Numismatic Museum suggests that very few of this type were struck. For although the hoard comprises some 800 bronze coins dated until the days of Rabbel II and includes a large number of tiny bronze specimens, it does not contain a single one of the type under discussion here.

The Titles

Besides the general degeneration in his coins, which led us to conclude that Malichus II's reign marked a decline in the Nabataean kingdom, there is another, surprising feature

which may also be related to this circumstance.

Malichus' father Aretas IV had the title רחם עמה (the lover of his people), which occurs very frequently both on his coins and in his inscriptions. Under Malichus II, however, this title disappears completely,[171] not by chance but by design, as may be inferred, for example, from the Salḥad inscription,[172] written:

> בירח אב שנת עשר ושבע למלכו מלך נבטו בר חרתת מלך נבטו רח[ם] עמה (in the month of Av, year seventeen of Malichus, king of the Nabataeans, the son of Aretas, king of the Nabataeans, the lov[er of] his people).

Here we can clearly see that the absence of the title רחם עמה (the lover of his people) or, for that matter, any other title, was not accidental but deliberate. This seems to have had a special significance, certainly not to the credit of Malichus II.

Whereas all the inscriptions and coins of Malichus have only the title מלכא מלך נבטו (the king, king of the Nabataeans), his son and successor Rabbel II was given the additional title of די אחיי ושיזב עמה (who resuscitated and saved his people).

X. THE COINS OF RABBEL II, 70–106 C. E.

Although Rabbel II reigned for 36 years, he is not mentioned in the historical sources. The only information we have about him derives from archaeological evidence, both epigraphic and numismatic. For the chronology of Rabbel II the most important inscription is one which was found between Damascus and Palmyra,[173] because it contains a double date, the one according to Rabbel's regnal years (שנת 24 לרבאל מלכא: year 24 of Rabbel the king), the other according to the 'Roman' era (שנת 405 במנין ארהומיא: year 405 in the Arhomaya era), which is undoubtedly the Seleucid era, current then, too, in the East.[174] The year 405 corresponds to 93 C.E. Since this was Rabbel II's twenty-fourth year, he began to reign in 70 C.E., which is also the latest year in which his father Malichus II is mentioned (see p. 64 above).

The Dated Inscriptions

The following are the relevant passages in the dated inscriptions of the days of Rabbel II.

1. Inscription from El-Ḥejra:[175] בירח איר שנת תרתין לרבאל מלך נבטו (in the month of Iyyar, year two of Rabbel, king of the Nabataeans) (71 C.E.).

2. Inscription from El-Ḥejra:[176] בשנת ארבע לרבאל מלך נבטו (in year four of Rabbel, king of the Nabataeans) (73 C.E.).

3. Inscription from Avdat:[177] בשנת 7 ... לרבאל מלכא מלך נבטו די אחיי ושיזב עמה (in

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171 Negev, *op. cit.* (above, n. 8), p. 115, deals with this point.

172 *CIS*, II, 182.

173 The inscription was found at Dumêr, on the way between Damascus and Palmyra, and is in the Louvre. See *ibid.*, II, 161.

174 A Phoenician inscription found north of Acre (*CIS* I, 7) also has a double date, the one according to the Tyrian era שת 143 לעם צר (in the year 143 according to the era of the Tyrians), and the other, like the Nabataean inscription of Dumêr, according to the Seleucid era, called in the Phoenician inscription 'the year of the lord of the kings' — בשת 180 לאדן מלכים (in the year 180 of the lord of the kings).

175 *CIS*, II, 224. An inscription of year תרתין לרב[אל] (two of Rabb[el]) has also been published by Littmann, *op. cit.* (above, n. 163), No. 2.

176 *CIS*, II, 225.

177 Negev, *op. cit.* (above, n. 8), pp. 113, 115, reads שנת חי (?) (year 18 [?]). We, however, propose the reading שנת 7 (year seven).

year 7 . . . of Rabbel the king of the Nabataeans, who resuscitated and saved his people) (76 C.E.).

4. Inscription from Avdat:[178] שנת 18 למראנא רב[אל] די אחיי ושיזב [עמה] (year 18 of our lord Rabb[el], who resuscitated and saved [his people]) (87 C.E.).

5. Inscription from Ḥauran:[179] בשנת 23 לרבאל מלכא מלך נבטו די אחיי ושיזב עמה (in year 23 of Rabbel the king, king of the Nabataeans, who resuscitated and saved his people) (92 C.E.).

6. Judaean Desert Document:[180] שנת עשרין ותלת לרבאל מלכא מלך נבטו די אחיי ושיזב עמה (year twenty-three of Rabbel the king, king of the Nabataeans, who resuscitated and saved his people) (92 C.E.).

7. Inscription from Ḍumêr:[181] שנת 24 לרבאל מלכא (year 24 of Rabbel the king) (93 C.E.).

8. Inscription from Salḥad:[182] ב[שנ]ת עשרין וחמש לרבאל . . . די אחיי עמה ו[שיזב] (in [yea]r twenty-five of Rabbel . . . who resuscitated his people and [saved it]) (94 C.E.).

9. Inscription from Ḥauran:[183] בשנת עשרי[ן ו]שת לרבאל מלכא מלך נבטו די אחיי ושיזב עמה (in year twent[y-] six of Rabbel the king, king of the Nabataeans, who resuscitated and saved his people) (95 C.E.).

10. Judaean Desert Document:[184] שנת עשרין ותמונא לרבאל מלכא מלך נבטו די אחיי ושיזב עמה (year twenty-eight of Rabbel the king, king of the Nabataeans, who resuscitated and saved his people) (97 C.E.).

11. Inscription from Ḥauran:[185] בשנת 36 לרבאל (in year 36 of Rabbel) (105/6 C.E.).

Yet another inscription, which omits the name of the king and contains the date 28 שנת (year 28), has been published by A. Negev,[186] who attributes it to Rabbel II.

The Numismatic Evidence

The numismatic material of Rabbel II is richer than that of his father Malichus II. There are very few types of coins, for the coins of Rabbel II are in principle also based on only two main archetypes. One is of silver coins, which differ from each other in the names of the queens and in the dates on them; the other is of bronze coins, which are a continuation of the earlier type of the days of his father and grandfather and which vary only in their inscriptions. Yet within the limits of these two archetypes there are numerous versions, testifying to great activity on the part of the Nabataean mint at that time. Rabbel II's bronze issues are superior in quality to those of his father, and the striking is stronger. However, in the silver and particularly in the bronze coins, there is a deterioration in the standard of artistic execution.

The First Group, that of Rabbel II and His Mother Shuqailat

The Silver Coins (Nos. 142–145)

Silver coins of Rabbel and his mother Shuqailat were first discovered in the Murabba'at hoard, published in 1958. Until then scholars knew only of bronze coins bearing the name of Shuqailat, but, since these are undated, it was impossible to fix the limits of their minting. Now, because of the Murabba'at hoard, we are able to reconstruct something of the history of the Nabataean queens

178 *Idem*, *op. cit.* (above, n. 124), p. 135, No. 8.

179 R. Dussaud and F. Macler: *Voyage archéologique au Ṣafâ et dans le Djebel ed-Drûz*, Paris, 1901, p. 168, No. 36.

180 See Y. Yadin: Expedition D — The Cave of the Letters, *IEJ* 12 (1962), p. 239.

181 *CIS*, II, 161.

182 *Ibid.*, II, 183.

183 Dussaud and Macler, *op. cit.* (above, n. 179), p. 187, No. 62 b.

184 Yadin, *op. cit.* (above, n. 180), p. 239.

185 Published by P. Jaussen and Savignac: Rab'el II et Malikou III, *RB* VIII, (1911), pp. 273–277.

186 Negev, *op. cit.* (above, n. 124), pp. 136–138, No. 9b.

in the days of Rabbel II, the last of the Nabataean kings.

Of the 71 coins of Rabbel II found in the hoard, 11 belong to the first group of silver coins. This figure attests the comparative rarity of the coins of Rabbel and Shuqailat, and explains their absence until 1958. Of these 11 coins, 7 have dates which can be read with either complete or some certainty, and which refer to Rabbel's first, second, third, and fourth years. The following is a description of this type.

Obv. Laureate bust of Rabbel II r., with long hair hanging down to nape of neck, draped; around, inscr. (on r., upwards) רבאל מלך נבטו שנת 1/2/3/ 6/5/4 (Rabbel, king of the Nabataeans. Year 1/2/3/4/5/6.

Rev. Laureate bust of Shuqailat his mother r., veiled and draped, sometimes wearing earrings; around, inscr. (on r., upwards) שקילת אמה מלכת נבטו (Shuqailat his mother, the queen of the Nabataeans). Av. weight 3.20 gr.

Shuqailat, the mother of Rabbel II, died during the sixth year of his reign (75/6 C.E.)[187] Accordingly the bronze coins of Rabbel II bearing the name of Shuqailat are likewise to be dated between 70 and 75/6 C.E.

Foom 76 C.E. onwards Rabbel II began to rule together with his first wife Gamilat and also apparently received the appellation די אחיי ושיזב עמה (who resuscitated and saved his people).[188]

Shuqailat II, mentioed in the 6th year of the reign of Rabbel II (see coin No. H12) apparently died during the first half of this year. Immediately afterwards, in the same year coins of Rabbel and his first wife Gamilat were minted, dated to the second half of Rabbel's 6th year of rule — 75 C. E.

The silver coins of Rabbel and Shuqailat have a more 'classic' character than those struck subsequently. Relatively fine work distinguishes these issues, and the designs are well executed. This first group of the coins of Rabbel is conspicuous for its special style as compared to that of his other coins, so that even if specimens were to be found on which the inscription is no longer preserved, we would still be able to state that they are not later than 75/6 C.E.

The Bronze Coins (No. 146)

The coins of Rabbel and his mother Shuqailat were also struck in bronze. Their description is as follows:

Obv. Jugate portraits of Rabbel II and Shuqailat r., laureate, head of Rabbel with very long hair covering nape of neck, bust of Shuqailat draped.

Rev. Two cornucopiae crossed; between them, above and below, inscr.
רבאל (Rabbel)
שקילת (Shuqailat)
אמה (his mother)

187 Only after this study was completed were coins of the fifth and sixth years of Rabbel (and Shuqailat) revealed, thus closing the gap between Shuqailat and Gamilat.

188 The reading of the dates on the coins of Rabbel and Gamilat is always beset with more difficulties than that of the other Nabataean coins. For here, in addition to the usual difficulties mentioned on p. 64, above, are problems raised by a careless style and a crude execution of dates, inscriptions, and designs; only seldom can a date be read with complete certainty.

Table G

SILVER CONTENT OF NABATAEAN COINS

Year	*Date*	*Silver Content*	*Coin No.*
Obodas II			
60 B.C.E.	Year Three	96%	11
60 B.C.E.	Year Three	87%	11A
Malichus I			
35 B.C.E.	Year 26	91%	12
Obodas III			
28 B.C.E.	Year Three	93.5%	21
28 B.C.E.	Year Three	85%	21
25 B.C.E.	Year Six	83%	23
23 B.C.E.	Year 8	73%	28
21 B.C.E.(?)	Year Ten	74%	30A
14 B.C.E.	Year 17	72%	32
11 B.C.E.	Year 20	65.5%	38
Syllaeus			
9 B.C.E.	—	74%	40
9 B.C.E.	—	73.5%	41
Aretas IV			
9 B.C.E.	Year One	68%	46
9 B.C.E.	Year One	70%	47A
9 B.C.E.	Year One	Silvered(?)	48
9 B.C.E.	Year 1	72%	49
8 B.C.E.	Year 2	47%	51
7 B.C.E.	Year 3	73%	52
6 B.C.E.	Year 4	54%	53
4 B.C.E.	Year 6	72%	65
7 C.E.	Year 16	62%	94
7 C.E.	Year 16	41.5%	94
7 C.E.	Year 16	54%	94
18 C.E.	Year 27	39%	96
21 C.E.	Year 30	36%	100
25 C.E.	Year 34	51%	103
25 C.E.	Year 34	35.5%	103
26 C.E.	Year 35	36%	104
27 C.E.	Year 36	34%	105

Aretas IV

Year	*Date*	*Silver Content*	*Coin No.*
32 C.E.	Year 41	35%	107
35 C.E.	Year 44	38%	108
35 C.E.	Year 44	20%	108

Malichus II

42 C.E.	Year 3	40.5%	124
45 C.E.	Year 6	33%	127
48 C.E.	Year 9	42%	130
48 C.E.	Year 9(?)	25%	130
50 C.E.	Year 11	20%	132
55 C.E.	Year 16	20%	134
56 C.E.	Year 17	20%	135
61 C.E.	Year 22	20%	138
61 C.E.	Year 22	20%	138

Rabbel II

70 C.E.	Year 1	20%	142
72 C.E.	Year 3	20%	144
72 C.E.	Year 3	40.5%	144
73 C.E.	Year 4	40.5%	145
75 C.E.	Year 6	40.5%	147
78 C.E.	Year 9	42%	148
80 C.E.	Year 11	20%	149
86 C.E.	Year 17	20%	151
89 C.E.	Year 20	20%	152
93 C.E.	Year 24	20%	156
99 C.E.	Year 30	20%	159
100 C.E.	Year 31	20%	160

This type is important because of the way it differs from earlier issues. It will be recalled that coins of this very type were struck by both Aretas IV (Nos. 112–114) and Malichus II (No. 140) but in the coins of neither is the title of the queen (אחתה = his sister) mentioned, as it is on their silver coins. By contrast, on the coins of Rabbel issued in the days of Shuqailat the title אמה (his mother) is emphasized. On the later coins of Rabbel struck in the days of Gamilat (Nos. 162–163) and even in those of Hagru (No. 164; see below) the title of these two queens does not appear. The only such instance on this type of coin is to be found on the one under discussion, which shows the great importance of Shuqailat, the mother of Rabbel, during 70–74 C.E. (we shall deal with this at greater length below; see p. 75).

Although the bronze coins are undated it is quite clear that they were not minted after 74 C.E., and should be assigned to 70–76 C.E.

From the table on p. 69 we see that the average weight of these bronze coins, although low (2.46 gr.), is higher than that of the bronze issues of Malichus II (2.34 gr.). They thus occupy an intermediate position between the debased coins of Malichus II and the heavier coins of Rabbel-Gamilat.

The Inscriptions

The parallel between the inscriptions on the coins of Rabbel II and those on stelae is extremely interesting, enabling us to reconstruct some aspects of the king's history.

On the first group of coins struck in 70–74 C.E., Rabbel's name occurs conspicuously without any title other than מלך נבטו (king of the Nabataeans). On the reverse, the coins have the queen's portrait with the inscription שקילת אמה מלכת נבטו (Shuqailat his mother, queen of the Nabataeans). It is clear from two contemporary inscriptions, found at El-Ḥejra and quoted above (Nos. 1 and 2), that Rabbel II indeed had no additional titles at this stage; contrary to most Nabataean inscriptions, the king's name occurs on them, too, simply as רבאל מלך נבטו (Rabbel, king of the Nabataeans). These inscriptions confirm, in our view, what is hinted at on the coins of the first group, namely, that in 70–76 C.E. Rabbel II's status was not particularly high. It may have been that his mother, mentioned on these coins, enjoyed a more privileged position in the Nabataean hierarchy. At any rate, when Gamilat became queen after Shuqailat's death, Rabbel was no longer simply מלך נבטו (king of the Nabataeans), but from then onwards bore a distinguished title and appellation. Although the coins generally tended to brevity, the word מלכא (king) was invariably attached to his name — רבאל מלכא מלך נבטו (Rabbel the king, king of the Nabataeans). The appellation די אחיי ושיזב עמה who resuscitated and saved his people) was added apparently in all the later inscriptions after the king's name and title of רבאל מלכא מלך נבטו (Rabbel the king, king of the Nabataeans). This corresponds to the brief addition of מלכא on the coins of Rabbel issued in 75–102 C.E., and conveys, we suggest, the real and full significance of that single word. For there is undoubtedly a connection between the title and the lengthy appellation which occur in inscriptions, on the one hand, and the title which occurs on coins, on the other.

Considerable historical importance has been ascribed to the expression די אחיי ושיזב עמה (who resuscitated and saved his people). It has been discussed by several scholars, among them A. Negev,[189] who reviewed the bibliography dealing with the meaning of this appellation. A. Kammerer,[190] on the basis of an inscription of 93 C.E., the earliest known to him containing this appellation, thought that it referred to Rabbel's success in preventing the annexation of his country to the Roman empire. Clermont-Ganneau,[191] doubtful that the appellation could relate to some political achievement of Rabbel, preferred to see in it a reference to a religious or social rank in the internal life of the Nabataeans. Having found this appellation in an inscription of year 18, Negev[192] arrived at a different conclusion. Correctly describing the developments leading to Rabbel II's advancement in royal status, he maintained that when Rabbel succeeded to the throne in 70 C.E. he was too young to discharge the duties of king, and was thus unable to take political advantage of the fall of Jerusalem in that year. Owing to his minority, Shuqailat was the virtual

189 Negev, *op. cit.* (above, n. 8), pp. 115–116.

190 A. Kammerer: *Pétra et la Nabatène*, Paris, 1929, p. 256.

191 *RAO* IV (1901), pp. 169–174, 189, 290, 395; VIII (1924), pp. 263–264.

192 Negev, *op. cit.* (above, n. 8), pp. 113–116, No. 10, Pl. 17.

ruler, and only after marrying Gamilat did Rabbel become the actual king. Negev overlooked the significant point of the transition from the regency of Shuqailat to that of Rabbel, and the elevation of Gamilat to the rank of queen. Thus he gave an historical explanation for Rabbel's new title and appellation by suggesting that they were connected with the Nabataeans' expanded rule over the Negev, particularly over its central area, where they established their capital in Avdat and where they introduced their particular method of agriculture. According to Negev this took place after they had lost the northern part of their kingdom of the Ḥauran region.

In our view, however, there are insufficient data for contending that Rabbel II had gained by then the political advantages that would have merited a title and an appellation of general historical and political significance. At that time the Nabataean kingdom was in a process of political decline which led ultimately to its becoming a Roman province in 106 C.E., perhaps even without a fight. We are thus inclined to regard this appellation as one of internal significance in the Nabataean royal court.

We have previously referred to Rabbel II's minority at the beginning of his reign, 70–76 C.E., when his mother was the effective ruler. But when Gamilat became the queen in 76 C.E., after the regency of Shuqailat had come to an end, Rabbel was six years older. In every respect he was now the king, a justification in itself for his assumption of a title and an appellation which emphasized his rise in the Nabataean hierarchy. It is our contention that the expressions מלכא... די אחיי ושיזב עמה (the king... who resuscitated and saved his people) denote the increased power that Rabbel II acquired in 76 C.E., as the sovereign ruler of the Nabataean kingdom.

Should further inscriptions of Rabbel II, dated between 76 and 85 C.E., come to light, they will, we believe, include this title and appellation. On the basis of the numismatic evidence alone, the additional title מלכא (the king), we suggest that the change in Rabbel's status occurred in 76 C.E.

The Main, Intermediate Group, that of Rabbel II and 'His Sister' Gamilat (Nos. 147–163)

With the discovery of the Murabba'at hoard it became clear that the first appearance of Gamilat, the wife of Rabbel II (אחתה, his sister, as she is called on the silver coins), is to be predated to 76 C.E.

The latest coins to bear her name were struck in 101/2 C.E. From 76 C.E. onwards a profound change took place in the style of the coins. Those of Rabbel-Gamilat are crudely made: the standard of their execution is low, the lines are rough and thick, and the features of the king and the queen, as engraved by the die-cutters, are not very flattering. Too, this crude striking rendered the inscriptions, especially the dates (their most significant aspect), so badly that they can rarely be read with any assurance. Nor did the minters trouble to make the diameter of the flan as large as the die, so that the inscriptions are for the most part off the flan.

From Rabbel's sixth to nineteenth years coins were struck irregularly, as is apparent from evidence derived mainly from the Murabba'at hoard. Only from his twentieth year did Nabataean minting rally once more. We have dated coins from that year until Rabbel's thirty-second year, with an interruption from his twenty-seventh to twenty-ninth years (96–98 C.E.).[193] The silver content of these coins is very low. Of some 30 coins whose specific gravity was examined, only one was found to contain 30% silver, while all the rest contained 20% or less. This low silver content continues the deterioration which took place in the quality of Nabataean silver. It explains the

[193] It was during this period that Nerva was emperor of Rome (96–98 C.E.). We are not sure whether there was any connection between these events or whether this was merely a coincidence.

complete absence from the Murabba'at hoard of silver coins dating from the beginning of Nabataean minting until Aretas IV's twenty-seventh year, for during that entire period Nabataean coins contained a large quantity of silver. The deterioration began in Aretas IV's twenty-seventh year, coinciding with the appearance of Shuqailat, Aretas IV's second wife. From that time onwards the Nabataeans were apt to hoard or melt down the earlier coins and to refrain from spending them, since their real value was much higher than that of the later coins.

The King's Bust

Rabbel's bust on the coins of this main, intermediate group is characterized by thick ringlets falling luxuriantly onto his shoulders and the nape of his neck; his chin is heavy and protrudes, and his eye is excessively large. This is in contrast to the bust of the king on the coins struck in 70–76 C.E. in the days of his mother Shuqailat.

The conspicuous technical feature employed in the later coins is the deep holes which were drilled to facilitate the engraving of the design on the die. Whereas on the earlier Nabataean coins such holes were made shallow and could thus be incorporated in the engraving of the design without leaving a trace, the holes on the coins of Rabbel-Gamilat were drilled too deeply to be incorporated into the design, so that the smaller features, particularly the chin, the lips, and the nose, have little knobs on them.

The Queen's Bust

Like Rabbel's bust, that of Gamilat is very crudely depicted, especially compared to the way in which Shuqailat is represented. Her lips are thick, her chin protrudes, the veil on her hair is made of thick, almost vertical lines. The contrast between Shuqailat and Gamilat is due not to the difference in their appearance, but rather to the artistic ability of the die-cutters. Although at the time when their portraits were engraved Shuqailat was old and Gamilat was clearly young, Gamilat is made to appear considerably older than Shuqailat.

Father Milik contends that on the later coins (from Rabbel's twenty-fifth year onwards) the queen looks very much older than on the earlier ones. The question naturally arises whether this change is due to the intention of the die-engraver or whether it is the consequence of crude engraving.

The Bronze Coins

All that we have said about the appearance of the silver coins applies to the bronze issues as well. They, too, are executed crudely and with coarse lines. The uniform style of the letters, preserved to a large extent on the silver coins, disappears on the bronze coins and is replaced by a great diversity, particularly in the case of the letters ג and מ.

These differences have a chronological significance. We believe that the letter מ written as ם is later than the normal מ written as ם and found on the coins of the earlier kings or even on those of Rabbel himself of the days of his mother Shuqailat. On the later coins the letter ג tends to slope rather than to be vertical, thus ⊁ instead of ⅄. Other letters undergo a change, but not in essence.

The significance of the different versions of the letters מ and ג in fixing the chronology of the coins is attested by their appearance on the coins of Rabbel and Shuqailat and on some of the issues of Rabbel and Gamilat. These coins of Gamilat on which such letters appear in their classic (older) form can be said to be earlier, that is, they belong to about 76–85 C.E.[194]

One specimen (No. 162), a hybrid of the bronze issues of the days of Shuqailat (No. 146) and the later coins of Gamilat (No. 163), furnishes evidence that the Rabbel-Gamilat

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194 We are unable, for lack of sufficient data, to arrive at a definite conclusion about the date when the coins of Rabbel-Gamilat with the classical letters were struck, but their large quantity suggests that they were minted at least during several consecutive years.

group of coins, which has the classic מ and ג, is to be dated to the early years of Gamilat's reign. Hence the group of coins of Rabel-Gamilat with the later versions of the letters is to be dated to about 85–102 C.E. We are not disposed to assign them to after 102 C.E., since the corresponding silver coins do not have dates subsequent to that year. Should such coins be found, we would obviously assign the final minting of the bronze coins to the same date.

Gamilat died most probably in 102 C.E. and was succeeded as queen of the Nabataeans by Hagru.

The Third Group, That of Rabbel and Hagru (No. 164)

In 1947 a previously unknown Nabataean bronze coin was published by A.S. Kirkbride.[195] On it the name of Hagru occurs for the first time on a coin. The following is its description.

Obv. Jugate busts of Rabbel II and Hagru r.

Rev. Two cornucopiae crossed; between them, inscr.
רבאל (Rabbel)
הגרו (Hagru)

Since this coin was published, several such specimens have been found, twenty of which we have been able to examine. All of them are in a comparatively good state of preservation and not a single one is worn, testifying to their having been little used.

Up to the present no silver coin of Rabbel bearing the name of Hagru has come to light, not even in the Murabba'at hoard. As that hoard was hidden in about 132 C.E., consequent on the outbreak of the Bar-Kokhba war,[196] we assume that, had such coins been in circulation, they would undoubtedly have been represented in the hoard. There are thus scant prospects that silver coins with the name of Hagru will yet be found, although it is not impossible. It is interesting to note that the bronze coins of Rabbel II and Hagru have a singularly uniform character. The shape of the letters and the style of the coins are identical in all details, giving the impression that all of them were made by the same artist within a limited period.

Hagru is known to us from a dedicatory inscription which gives the details of the Nabataean royal family in Rabbel II's last years.[197] The relevant passage begins at the end of the fifth line.

5. ... על חי[י]
6. [ר]באל [מ]לכא מלך נבטו די אחיי וש[י]זב ע[מ]ה
7. [וע]ל חיי גמלת והגרו אחת[ה מ]לכת נבטו בני מלכו
8. [מלכ]א מלך נבטו בר חרתת מלך נבטו רחם עמה
9.]ועל חי[י קשמא בר שע[ו]דת אחתה מלכת נבטו וע[ל]
10. [חיי ... מ]לכ[ו] בנ[י] רבאל וגמלת והגרו [ופצאל]
11. ... [אחותה מ]לכת נב[טו ועל ח]יי קשמא

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195 A.S. Kirkbride: Some Rare Coins from Transjordan, *BASOR* 106 (1947), pp. 4–5.

196 So, according to Milik, *op. cit.* (above, n. 21), p. 26. It should be pointed out that the only coin of Hadrian in this hoard was struck in 118 C.E., and there is consequently no particular reason to date the hoard as late as during the Bar-Kokhba revolt.

197 For the inscription, see Dalman, *op. cit.* (above, n. 51), p. 103, No. 92; *RES*, No. 1434; Cantineau, *op. cit.* (above, n. 4), pp. 9–10. A similar inscription was found in a Judaean desert document: see Yadin, *op. cit.* (above, n. 180), p. 239. In this Judaean desert inscription, which gives a genealogy resembling that in the present inscription, there is the interesting addition of עבדת בר רבאל מלכא (Obodas, the son of Rabbel the king). Yadin (p. 240) refers to the fact that this Obodas, mentioned here for the first time, is unknown from any other source. Nor does his name occur on coins. He was presumably the heir to the throne, but did not reign owing to the annexation of the Nabataean kingdom to the Roman provinces in 106 C.E.

12. [בר קשמא בשנת ... רבאל מלך נ[בטו די
א[ח]יי ושיזב
13. [עמה]

5. . . . for the life [of
6. [Ra]bbel the [k]ing, king of the Nabataeans, who r[e]suscitated and saved his peo[ple],
7. [and fo]r the life of Gamilat and Hagru [his] sister, the [qu]een of the Nabataeans, the children of Malichus
8. the [king], king of the Nabataeans, the son of Aretas, king of the Nabataeans, the lover of his people,
9. [and for the life] of Qashma, the son of S'[u]dat his sister, the queen of the Nabataeans, and fo[r]
10. [the life of . . . Ma]lich[us,] the sons [of] Rabbel and Gamilat and Hagru [and Phasael]
11. . . . [his sister,] the [q]ueen of the Na-ba[taeans, and for the life] of Qashma,
12. [the son of Qashma . . . in year . . . of Rabbel, king of the Na]bataeans, who re[suscit]ated and saved
13. [his people.])

Hagru is mentioned here after Gamilat as the 'sister' of Rabbel II. We know of an earlier Hagru from an inscription of the days of Aretas IV.[198] In it she figures as the daughter of Aretas IV and as the mother of a son named Aretas. Her name was thus apparently a dynastic one in the Nabataean royal family.

The above inscription is interesting from several aspects. First, it can be adduced in support of those who maintain that the expression 'sister' is indubitably used as a genealogical term and that the wives of Aretas IV and Rabbel II were also their real sisters. For they are described not only as sisters of the king but also as the daughters of the king's father בני מלכו מלכא מלך נבטו (the children of Malichus the king, king of the Nabataeans). On the other hand, Nabataean titles are not at all a simple matter. In this inscription Se'udat, the sister of Aretas IV (line 9), is called מלכת נבטו (the queen of the Nabataeans), a title which was apparently bestowed on her by reason of her being the king's sister. We have no knowledge that she was his wife, nor is there any hint of this. We are not sure of the precise significance of the title אח (brother) or אחות (sister), or of the status conferred by this title, or whether it was a family title or not.

It is impossible to decide whether this inscription dates from the days of Gamilat or from a later period, that is, between 103 and 106 C.E., in the days of Hagru, seeing that the title of queen in the inscription refers to both of them. This title may have been shared by more than one woman at one and the same time, that is, all the king's sisters may have been called queen (the king's brothers, however, were not given a corresponding royal title). The whole subject is a difficult one, there being insufficient data to enable us to arrive at a definite conclusion.

The coins of Rabbel and Hagru are the last to be issued by the Nabataean kingdom. They may have been minted between 103 and 106 C.E. or during only the last two years, or even in the very last year of the Nabataean kingdom. Their life-span was apparently not longer than this.

XI. EPILOGUE

It is not clear when the Nabataeans first minted coins but it was probably in about 100 B.C.E., with the striking of bronze imitations of the gold issues of Alexander the Great. Although they lack any distinctive Nabataean elements, these coins (Nos. 1, 2) nevertheless

198 *CIS*, II, 354.

mark an early stage in Nabataean minting. In areas settled by the Nabataeans they were used in the first century B.C.E. and perhaps even later.

The coins of Aretas III struck in Damascus in 84–71 B.C.E. (Nos. 5–8) constitute a further stage in Nabataean minting. They also lack any specific Nabataean features, and their circulation was limited geographically. But they are a link in the chain of the autonomous minting of Damascus, and were undoubtedly in use for a long time after the accession of other rulers in that city.[199] With their Greek inscriptions they are not at all reminiscent of the later Nabataean coins as we know them. While the portrait of Aretas III may be a likeness of him, it is executed in an unmistakably Hellenistic style, and his features are generally like those of the later Seleucid kings. Anyone in that or a subsequent period who omitted reading the inscriptions carefully would not have distinguished these coins from earlier Damascus issues minted in the days of the Seleucid rulers.

After 71 B.C.E. Aretas III, while continuing to reign over the Nabataeans, ceased to rule in Damascus and also, undoubtedly, to strike coins there. We have no definite evidence that Nabataean coins were struck under Aretas III after 71 B.C.E., but it seems highly probable that he continued to mint 'imitation coins,' such as Aretas II had done earlier (Nos. 1, 2). The numerous variations of these types known to us reinforce the supposition that these coins were struck during a lengthy period and that Aretas III played a part in issuing and circulating them for the region inhabited by the Nabataeans during the same time that he minted Damascus coins.

Soon after Pompey's conquest of the region, Obodas II (62–60 B.C.E.) succeeded to the throne and was able during his brief reign to mint the first distinctively Nabataeans coins on which Nabataean inscriptions appeared for the first time (Nos. 9, 10, 11).

The coins of Obodas II, which are extremely rare, are all made of silver and, with one exception, are all of the denomination of a half-shekel. Thus in contrast to Judaea, where at this time only small bronze coins were struck,[200] Nabataea minted silver coins of relatively large denominations. So far no bronze coins struck in Obodas II's days have been found. The portraits on his issues reflect the transition from the coins of the Seleucids (particularly as regards the form of the hair-dress) to the later Nabataean types with their distinctively 'Oriental' faces. The appearance of the coins bearing Nabataean inscriptions at the beginning of Roman hegemony over the Nabataean kingdom may indicate Rome's more tolerant attitude towards vassal states like Nabataea. In the preceding, Hellenistic, period, the pattern of relations between the central authority and the local government in the Nabataean kingdom rested on a different basis.

Obodas II was succeeded by his son Malichus I who reigned for 31 years but struck only a few coins (Nos. 12–19), during the very limited period of 35–32 B.C.E. when he was engaged in a war against Herod.

While his silver coins continued to imitate the general pattern of the Tyrian shekels, Malichus I also struck bronze coins, the first in the history of specifically Nabataean issues. Most of Malichus' reign constitutes a numismatic void, in that between 60 and 36 B.C.E. no coins were struck. Only with the accession of his son Obodas III did the Nabataean kingdom begin to mint coins more or less continuously throughout the reigns of the three succeeding Nabataean kings.

Under Obodas III a change took place in the monetary standard, for from 23 B.C.E.

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199 As can be seen, for example, from the Nisibis hoard (Seyrig, *loc. cit.* [above, n. 41]), in which a coin of Aretas III was found in the context of the middle of the first century B.C.E.

200 Hyrcanus II of Judaea, a contemporary of Obodas II, struck only small bronze coins. See Meshorer, *op. cit.* (above, n. 22), coins Nos. 18–27.

Nabataean coins of the denomination of a half-shekel were no longer issued. The coins of Obodas III were struck mainly during two periods, from 29 to 23 B.C.E. and from 14 to 10/9 B.C.E.[201] Obodas' minting, particularly of this latter, larger group, was related to his military needs and to political events arising from the armed conflict between himself and Herod in the last years of his rule. His principal coins thus date from the closing period of his reign, those of his earlier years being very rare.[202]

In 9 B.C.E. the Nabataean royal court was convulsed by a struggle for the crown between the legitimate heir Aretas IV, the son of Obodas III, and Syllaeus, the latter's brilliant army commander, who, during his very brief rule, succeeded in striking coins. Much investigation and study have still to be devoted both to the coins of Syllaeus (particularly Nos. 40–43, 45, on which his name is not specifically mentioned) and to other coins of these types that may yet come to light. In so doing one may determine whether they all form a homogeneous group that belongs to the period between the reigns of Obodas III and Aretas IV, or whether they are to be divided into two groups, one attributed to each king. Both the silver and the bronze coins have interesting, and hitherto unknown, characteristics, which later disappear. They were struck in small denominations, of which we were previously unaware. Numismatically, these coins are to be assigned to the broad chronological limits of 12–6 B.C.E., with 9 B.C.E. as their most probable date.

Aretas IV, the greatest of the Nabataean kings, ruled over the Nabataean kingdom from 9 B.C.E. to 40 C.E. Covering a period of 49 years, the coins of Aretas IV illustrate the various monetary crises through which his lengthy reign passed. Thus while the first part of Aretas IV's reign, in the days of Ḥuldu, is marked by the alternate or contemporaneous striking of silver and bronze coins, the second part, in the days of Shuqailat, witnessed an almost continuous minting of both silver and bronze coins. The coins of Aretas and Ḥuldu are well and beautifully made, and the diameters of the dies and the flans correspond. But the coins of Aretas and Shuqailat are executed crudely and at a low artistic level. In the latter part of Aretas' reign, quality was replaced by quantity, for more Nabataean coins were struck from 18 to 40 C.E. than during all the rest of the years of Nabataean minting.

Under Aretas IV there was a sharp drop in the metallic quality of the silver coins, a circumstance which has great significance for fixing the chronology of the coins.

The dates of the coins of Aretas IV, even if not preserved, can nevertheless be determined approximately on the basis of the characteristic features of the various groups of coins, in particular those relating to the composition of the metal, the style of execution, and the nature of the inscriptions and of the symbols

Aretas IV was succeeded by Malichus II, whose reign (40–70 C.E.) was marked by the political decline of the Nabataean kingdom within the Roman empire. Numismatically this decline is reflected in a limited minting, in the use of a very low silver content, in the striking of thin, light bronze coins and in the absence of titles. No further coins were struck in the eight years before the end of Malichus II's reign.

It is difficult not to draw a parallel between the position of Nabataea at this time and that of Judaea. After some recovery under Agrippa I (37–34 C.E.), Judaea again declined, leading to a sharp deterioration at the end of the 'sixties and to the destruction of the Second in the Temple in 70 C.E., the year of Malichus II's death.

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201 The only two exceptions to this polar chronological distribution are coins No. 28 of year eight and No. 30. These seem to constitute a rare intermediate group that has the marks of the later one.

202 For every coin in the earlier group, there are ten in the later group.

Rabbel II, the son of Malichus II and the last of the Nabataean kings, reigned from 70–106 C.E. It is apparent from his coins that the status of the king and of the Nabataean kingdom had reached a higher level than that which they had enjoyed under his father. The coins of Rabbel II may be divided into three groups, with the name of the queen as their principal distinguishing feature. At the beginning of his reign his mother Shuqailat is mentioned on his coins (70–76 C.E.). Since she survived for only a few years of Rabbel II's reign, this is a limited group of coins. The main and most varied group is the middle one, comprising the coins of Rabbel and Gamilat, his first wife, who was queen at least from 76 to 102 C.E., the main period of Rabbel II's rule. His second wife, Hagru, was queen for only a short time, for in 106 C.E. Nabataea was annexed to the Roman empire.

Postcript

With its annexation to the Roman empire in the East, the Nabataean kingdom came to an end as an ethnic and geographic unit. For some decades more its culture continued to survive, except for certain aspects which also ceased in that year. Of these the most prominent was Nabataean minting.

We do not know what in fact happened to the Nabataean coins in Provincia Arabia and in the neighbouring territories, but after 106 C.E. they presumably tended to disappear. Proof of this can be adduced from several Nabataean tombs uncovered at Kurnub, in which were found coins of Trajan of the Provincia Arabia type[203] struck immediately after 106 C.E. and intended to replace the Nabataean coins in the region. Furthermore, an examination of the silver denarii of Trajan found in the Kurnub hoard[204] reveals that some of the coins were overstruck on Nabataean denarii. This suggests that the Roman domination of Arabia in 106 C.E. and the latter's transformation into Provincia Arabia, of which we have no details, except for one sentence in Dio Cassius,[205] were apparently associated with the control or confiscation of the Nabataean royal treasures. Instead of melting down the coins seized, those in charge of the Provincia's finances preferred to use them as flans for the provincial denarii of Trajan.[206] Examples of such overstriking are to be found in various collections in addition to the Kurnub hoard.[207]

All the coins not seized by the Romans from Rabbel II's treasuries or remaining in the possession of the local population apparently continued to circulate as before, and disappeared only gradually. This is attested by the Murabba'at hoard, which contained, in addition to Nabataean coins, various Roman ones, in particular those of Trajan, as well as one of Hardrian 119–122 C.E., thus indicating that 16 years after the establishment of Provincia Arabia, Nabataean coins still circulated alongside Roman denarii.

In the Kurnub hoard three Nabataean denarii were also found. These apparently belonged to the earliest complex of the hoard, which comprised a group of coins dating from Nero to Hadrian.

In view of the scant historical documentation about the Nabataeans and the vast enigma that surrounds their culture and history,

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203 See Sydenham, *op. cit.* (above, n. 7), No. 183; Wroth, *op. cit.* (above, n. 35), p. 54, Nos. 59–64.

204 For details of this hoard, see above, n. 7.

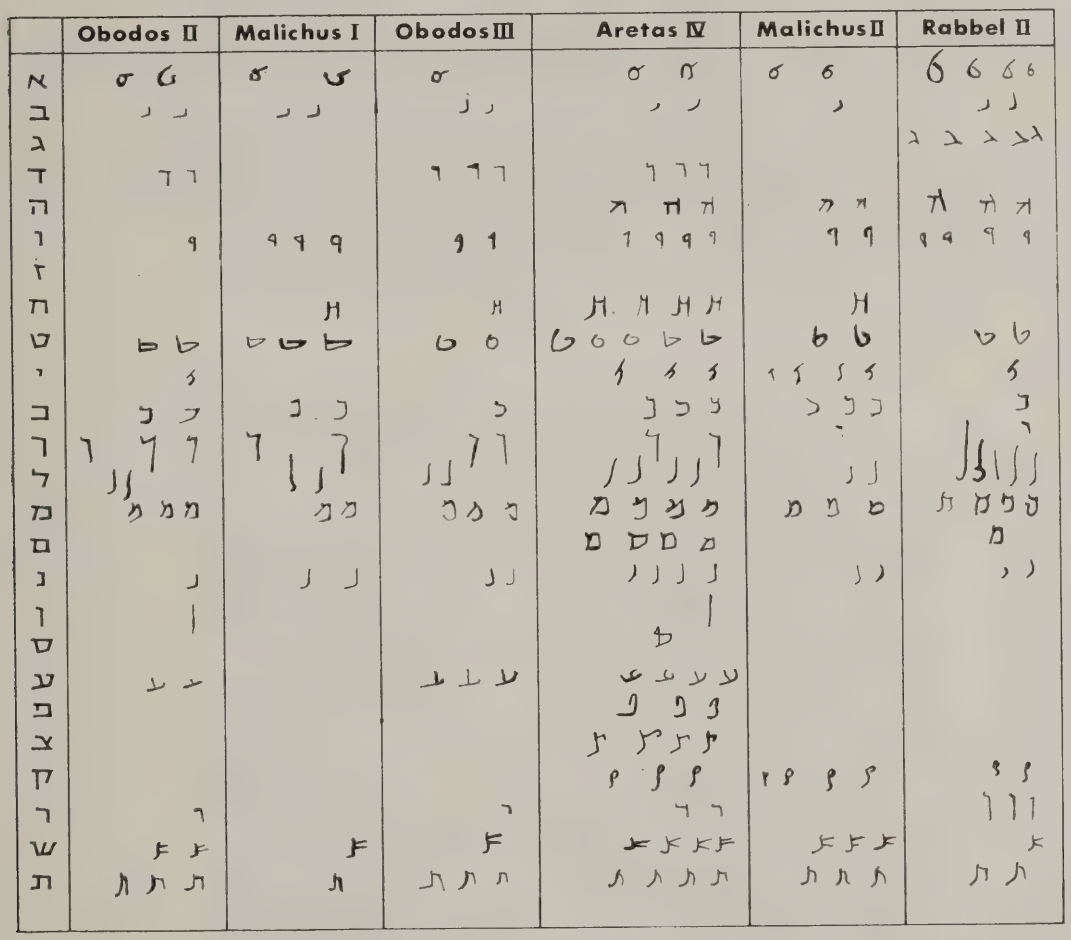
205 *Dio's Roman History loc. cit.* (above, n. 6).

206 For the place where these coins of the Provincia Arabia type, struck by Trajan, were minted, see above, n. 7. See also A. Negev: Notes on Some Trajanic Drachms from the Mampsis Hoard, *Jahrbuch für Numismatik und Geldeschichte*, XXI (1971), pp. 115–120, Pls. 9–12. For an example of a denarius of Trajan restruck on a Nabataean coin, on which the word נבטו (Nabataean) appears prominently, see Pl. VII, h (and the accompanying enlargement), below.

207 Another denarius of Trajan of the Provincia Arabia type on which traces of the former Nabataean coin can be seen, was discovered together with several other finds from the days of Bar-Kokhba in excavations conducted in 1968 in a cave in Naḥal Rimmon, east of Ramallah.

paramount importance attaches to Nabataean numismatics, since it provides a firm basis for reconstructing various elements in the history of the Nabataeans, in particular the chronology and genealogy of the Nabataean royal house.

This people, one of whose notable attributes was its capacity to develop trade and trade routes in all directions, evolved its own currency which played an important role in this activity, especially in the period of the later Nabataean kings, from the days of Obodas III onwards.



Nabataean Alphabet on Coins

CATALOGUE OF THE COINS

Abbreviations used in describing the coins in the Catalogue:

B:	Bronze	L:	Lead	O/Obv:	Obverse
Coll:	Collection	M:	Metal	R/Rev:	Reverse
Diam:	Diameter	Mm:	Millimetre	S:	Silver
Gm.:	Grams	Num:	Numerous (i.e. ten and more)	Wt:	Weight

Notes on the coins and on the Catalogue:

a) With one or two exceptions, the axis of all Nabataean coins is ↑.
b) Where the reference in the last column is in parentheses, the coin has been wrongly attributed.
c) An asterisk(*) alongside the name of a collection indicates that the coin is pierced.
d) Illustrated in the Plates are the first coins of the various types listed.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS OF MUSEUMS AND COLLECTIONS

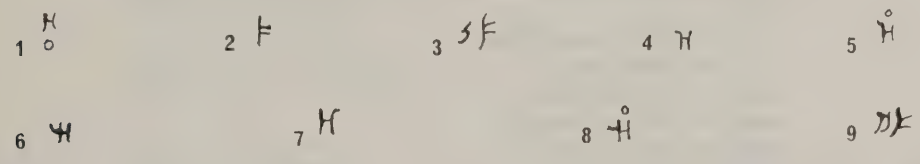
ANS	The Museum of the American Numismatic Society, New York
ASH	The Ashmolean Museum, Oxford
B	The Museum of Beirut
BER	The National Museum of Berlin
BET	A. Better Collection, Haifa
BEZ	Formerly Bezalel Collection, Jerusalem
BM	The British Museum, London
CAM	The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge
CDM	Cabinet des Médailles, Paris
DS	De Saulcy Collection
EW	Prinz Ernst zu Windischgrätz
FRA	A. Frankel Collection, Tel Aviv
H	The new hoard found after this study had been completed (see supplement)
GL	Hunterian Museum, Glasgow
GRO	E. Grosswirth Collection, Jerusalem
HA	Konninklijk Penningkabinet, The Hague
HAR	Harant Colletion, Jerusalem
HU	The Hebrew University, Jerusalem
K	Sh. Kedar Collection, Afula
KAD	The Kadman Numismatic Museum, Tel Aviv
KIR	Kirkbride Collection, USA
KL	Klaksbald Collection, Paris
MR	Munster N. Collection, Jerusalem
MUN	Munich Museum, Germany
MOM	K. Momjian Jerusalem
NCU	The University of Newcastle, England
PAP	G. Papadopulos Collection, Athens

ROCK	The Rockefeller Museum, Jerusalem
ROS	M. Rosenberger Collection, Jerusalem
RUD	A. Rudolf Collection, Jerusalem
RUM	Romania
SAS	Y. Sasson Collection, Jerusalem
SBF	Studium Biblicum Franciscanum, Jerusalem
ST.A	St. Anna Monastry, Jerusalem
SP	A. Spear Collection, Jerusalem
V	Vienna
WILL	Y. Willinger Collection, Tel Aviv
Z	S. Zeitzuv Collection, Ness-Ziona

Abbreviations of works in which some coins mentioned in the catalogue have been previously published

BASOR	*Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*, 106 (1947), pp. 4–5.
BMC	*Catalogue of the Greek Coins in the British Museum, Arabia, Mesopotamia and Persia.*
D	R. Dussaud: Numismatique des Rois de Nabatène, *JA* 3 (1904), pp. 189–238.
DS	F. de Saulcy: La numismatique des rois Nabathéens de Pétra, *AN* 4 (1873), pp. 1–35.
M	Trésor monétaire de Murabba'ât, *RN* 1 (1958), pp. 11–22.
NCh	*Numismatic Chronicle* 16 (1936). (The reference here is to the number of the coin.)

LIST OF MARKS AND MONOGRAMS IN THE CATALOGUE



Date	No.	Aretas II, *ca.* 110–96 B.C.E.	M	Dies O/R	Wt Gm	Diam Mm	Coll	Published in
	1	*Obv.* Helmeted head r. *Rev.* Winged Nike standing l., holding uncertain object in l. hand and wreath in r.; careless style; in field l., crescent and letter Λ (A?)	B	Num	3.18 3.25 2.80	15 16 17	SBF SBF K	—
	1A	Same as No. 1, except that in field l., no letter or crescent.	B	Num	1.50 2.80	16 18	MR K	—
	2	*Obv.* Helmeted head r.; extremely careless style. *Rev.* Same as No. 1. Generally difficult to distinguish the details. Many of these coins are of a debased weight and struck on irregular flans.	B	Num	3.26 2.34 2.27 1.97	16 13 14 14	BM BM BM BM	NCh 8–11
		Aretas II, Obodas I, Rabbel I, Aretas III, *ca.* 90–62 B.C.E.						
	3	*Obv.* Head of Aretas (?) r. resembling that of Nabataean	L	1/1			K	—

Date	No.		M	Dies O/R	Wt Gm	Diam Mm	Coll	Published in
		kings, wearing characteristic cloak. *Rev.* Same as No. 2. (This is the only Nabataean lead coin known to us.)						
	4	*Obv.* Same as No. 1. *Rev.* Same as No. 1, except that the usual letter and crescent are replaced by Π	B	2/2	3.10 4.64	19 20	ROS GRO	—
	Sup 1	*Obv.* Head of Nabataean king (Aretas II?) r. diademed *Rev.* Same as No. 2.	S?	1/1	2.16	13	MR	—
		Aretas III, 84–71 B.C.E. (Coins of Damascus)						
	5	*Obv.* Diademed Head of Aretas III r. *Rev.* Tyche of Damascus seated l. on rock, wearing long mantle, holding uncertain object in r. hand, a river-god swimming below; in field, in three vertical lines, inscr. *ΒΑΣΙΛ[ΣΩΕ]/ΑΡΕΤΟΥ/ΦΙΛΕΛΛΗΝΟΣ*	S	1/1	13.10	28	BM	—
	6	*Obv.* Diademed head of Aretas III r. *Rev.* Tyche of Damascus turreted, seated l. on rock, wearing mantle on lower part of body, holding cornucopiae in l. hand, extending r. hand, river-god (of Chrysorrhoas River) swimming below; in field, in three vertical lines, inscr. *ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ/ΑΡΕΤΟΥ/ΦΙΛΕΛΛΗΝΟΣ;* last word divided by hand of Tyche into *ΦΙΛΕ ΛΛΗΝΟΣ* in field l., AP	B	Num	7.43 8.31 7.87 7.14 6.51 6.15 6.08 5.96 5.26	20 20 19 20 19 18 19 19 19	BM CDM CDM BM CDM CDM BM ANS BM	D 3
	6A	Same as No. 6, but with last word of inscr. divided by hand of Tyche into *ΦΙΛ ΕΛΛΗΝΟΣ*	B	3/2	6.61	19	BM	D 4
	7	*Obv.* Diademed head of Aretas III r. *Rev.* Nike in guise of Tyche,	B	2/3	10.10 8.16 7.85	21 20 20	CDM BM ST.A	D 1

Date	No.		M	Dies O/R	Wt Gr	Diam Mm	Coll	Published in
		turreted, standing l., winged, holding palm-branch in l. hand and waving wreath with r.; in field, in three vertical lines, inscr. *ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ/ ΑΡΕΤΟΥ/ΦΙΛΕΛΛΗΝΟΣ*; hand of Nike divides last word into *ΦΙΛΕ ΛΛΗΝΟΣ*; in field l., AP						
	7A	Same as No. 7, but with last word of inscr. divided by hand of Nike into *ΦΙΛ ΕΛΛΗΝΟΣ*	B	2/2	8.02	21	BM	D 2
	8	*Obv.* Diademed head of Aretas III r. *Rev.* Nike in guise of Tyche, turreted, standing l., winged, holding sceptre in l. hand and waving wreath to her front with r.; in field, in two vertical lines, inscr. *ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩ[Σ]/ΑΡΕΤΟΥ*; in field l., AP	B	1/1	3.25 2.95	15 15	CDM GL	D 5
		Obodas II, 62–60 B.C.E.						
62/61 B.C.E.	9	*Obv.* Bust of Obodas II r., wearing diadem on head and mantle on shoulders. *Rev.* Eagle standing l., around, inscr. עבדת מלכא מלך נבטו (Obodas the king, king of the Nabataeans); in field, ש 1 (y[ear] 1)	S	1/1	3.36	15	K	—
61/60 B.C.E.	10	*Obv.* Same as No. 9 *Rev.* Same as No. 9; inscr. עבדת מלכא מלך נבטו (Obodas the king, king of the Nabataeans); in field, שנת תרתין (year two)	S	1/2	6.76 6.25	20/23 20	CDM ANS	D 6
60 B.C.E.	11	*Obv.* Same as No. 9. *Rev.* Same as No. 9; inscr. עבדת מלכ (*sic*) מלך נבטו (Obodas king king of the Nabataeans); in field, שנת תלת (year three)	S	1/1	6.68 6.78	20 19	BM EW	D 7
60 B.C.E.	11A	*Obv.* Same as No. 9, except that hair is longer: style	S	1/1	6.49	19/21	NCU	—

Date	No.		M	Dies O/R	Wt Gr	Diam Mm	Coll	Published in
		somewhat crude. *Rev.* Same as No. 9; inscr. עבדת מלכא מלך נבטו (Obodas the king, king of the Nabataeans); in field, שנת תלת (year three)						
		Malichus I, 60–30 B.C.E.						
35/34 B.C.E.	12	*Obv.* Diademed head of Malichus I r., with long curly hair. *Rev.* Eagle standing l.; around, inscr. מלכו מלכא מלך נבטו (Malichus the king, king of the Nabataeans); in field, on r., IKE, on l., no. 1	S	1/1	6.50	22	BM	D 8
34/33 B.C.E.	13	*Obv.* Same as No. 12. *Rev.* Cornucopiae; around, inscr. מלכו מלכא מלך נבטו (Malichus the king, king of the Nabataeans); in field, שנת 27 (year 27)	B	1/1	10.05	22	K	—
34/33 B.C.E.	14	*Obv.* Same as No. 12. *Rev.* Same as No. 12; inscr. [נבטו] מלכו מלכא מלך (Malichus the king, king of the [Nabataeans]); in field, שנת 27 (year 27)	B	1/1	5.39	18	SBF	—
34/33 B.C.E.	15	*Obv.* Same as No. 12. *Rev.* Same as No. 12; inscr. מלכו מלכא מלך נבטו (Malichus the king, king of the Nabataeans); in field, ש 27 (y[ear] 27) (20 is on one side of eagle, 7 on the other)	B	1/1	5.66	21	SBF	—
34/33 B.C.E.	16	*Obv.* Same as No. 12. *Rev.* Same as No. 12; inscr. [מלך נבטו] מלכו מלכא (Malichus the king, [king of the Nabataeans]); in field, ש 27 (y[ear] 27)	B	1/1	5.40	19	SP	—
34/33 B.C.E.	17	*Obv.* Same as No. 12. *Rev.* Extended palm of hand; around, inscr. מלכו מלכא מלך נבטו (Malichus the king, king	B	1/1	2.27 2.46	16 17	CDM SBF	—

Date	No.		M	Dies R/O	Wt Gr	Diam Mm	Coll	Published in
		of the Nabataeans); in field, 27 ש (y[ear] 27) (with 20 on one side of the palm of the hand and 7 on the other); on l., 0						
34/33 B.C.E.	17A	*Obv.* Same as No. 12. *Rev.* Same as No. 17; inscr. [מלכו מ]לכא מלך נבטו (Malichus [the] k[ing, king of the Nabataeans]); in field, 27 ש (y[ear] 27); above ח; the whole number occurs in field 1. (and is not split up as on No. 17).	B	2/2	4.46 3.59	16 16	SBF K	—
33/32 B.C.E.	18	*Obv.* Same as No. 12. *Rev.* Same as No. 13; inscr. מלכו מלכא מלך נבטו (Malichus the king, king of the Nabataeans); in field, 28 שנת (year 28); on l., ח	B	3/2	9.36 12.42 9.41 9.28	23 23 24 24	SBF HU ROS CDM	(D 44)
33/32 B.C.E.	19	*Obv.* Same as No. 12. *Rev.* Same as No. 17; inscr. [מלכו מל]כא מלך נבטו (Malichus [the] kin[g, king of the Nabataeans]); in field, 28 [ש] ([year] 28) (with 20 on one side of palm of hand and 8 on the other)	B	1/1	2.73	17	K	—
		Obodas III, 30–9 B.C.E.						
29/28 B.C.E.	20	*Obv.* Jugate busts r. of Obodas III and of the queen, the king draped, wearing wide diadem around wavy hair; in field, [o] ח *Rev.* Eagle standing l.; around, inscr. עבדת מלכא מלך נבטו (Obodas the king, king of the Nabataeans); in field, [ן]שנת תרתי (year tw[o]) and o ח	S	1/1	6.63	19	KL	—
28/27 B.C.E.	21	*Obv.* Same as No. 20; in field r., ח *Rev.* Same as No. 20; inscr. עבדת מלכא מלך נבטו (Obodas	S	3/3	6.56 6.84 6.55	19 19 19	BM BER K*	D 9

Date	No.		M	Dies R/O	Wt Gr	Diam Mm	Coll	Published in
		the king, king of the Nabataeans); in field, שנת תלת (year three) and o ח						
26/25 B.C.E.	22	*Obv.* Same as No. 20. *Rev.* Same as No. 20; inscr. עבדת מלך (*sic*) מלך נבטו (Obodas king [*sic*], king of the Nabataeans); in field, שנת חמש (year five)	S	1/1	6.89	20	CDM	D 10
25/24 B.C.E.	23	*Obv.* Same as No. 20. *Rev.* Same as No. 20; inscr. עבדת מלכא מלך [נבטו] שנת שת (Obodas the king, king of [the Nabataeans]. Year six); in field, o ח Inscr. on r. is not quite legible, the suggested שנת שת (year six) being based on the lower extremities of the letters (only the last letter ת is completely legible).	S	1/1	6.35	20	ROCK	—
25/24 B.C.E.	24	*Obv.* Same as No. 20. *Rev.* Two cornucopiae crossed; around, inscr. עבדת מלכא מלך נבטו (Obodas the king, king of the Nabataeans); in field, שנת שת (year six).	B	1/1	11.21	25	SBF	—
24/23 B.C.E.	25	*Obv.* Diademed bust(?) of Obodas III r., with long hair reaching to shoulders; below r., ח (?) *Rev.* Same as No. 20; inscr. עבדת מלכא מלך נבטו (Obodas the king, king of the Nabataeans); in field, שנת שבע (year seven)	S	2/2	6.70	19	SAS SP	—
24/23 B.C.E.	26	*Obv.* Same as No. 20. *Rev.* Same as No. 24; inscr. עבדת מלכא מלך נבטו שנת שבע (Obodas the king, king of the Nabataeans. Year seven); in field, o ח	B	2/3	8.74 9.92 8.72	24 24 24	GRO SBF K	—
24/23 B.C.E.	27	*Obv.* Same as No. 20. *Rev.* Same as No. 20; inscr. עבדת מלכא מלך נבטו שנ[ת שבע] (Obodas the king, king	B	1/1	5.15 3.93	17 17	KAD SBF	—

Date	No.		M	Dies R/O	Wt Gr	Diam Mm	Coll	Published in
		of the Nabataeans. Yea[r seven]); in field, o ח						
23/22 B.C.E.	28	*Obv.* Jugate heads r. of Obodas III and of queen, the former with diademed hair falling in curls on nape of neck, the latter draped. *Rev.* Head of Obodas III r., with long curly hair diademed falling down on nape of neck; around, inscr. עבדת מלכ[א] שנת 8 (Obodas [the] king. (Year 8); in field l.,	S	1/1	4.31	17/19	K	—
21/20 B.C.E.	29	*Obv.* Same as No. 28. *Rev.* Same as No. 28; inscr. עבדת מלכא מלכ (*sic*) נבטו שנת 10 (Obodas the king, king of the Nabataeans. Year 10)	S	2/2	3.97 4.43	18 17	SP RUM	—
21/20 B.C.E.	30	*Obv.* Same as No. 28. *Rev.* Same as No. 28; inscr. עבדת מלכא שנת עשר (Obodas the king. Year ten)	S	1/1	4.50	17	DS	D 11
	30A	Same as No. 30, but without date. Yet may be an identical coin.	S	1/1	4.23	17	HU	—
18/17 B.C.E.	31	*Obv.* Diademed head of Obodas III r.; in field. *Rev.* Woman (queen?) standing l., wearing long mantle with girdle, raising r. hand with palm extended; around, inscr. עבדת מלך נבטו שנת 13 (Obodas, king of the Nabataeans. Year 13); in field, o ח	B	1/1	3.48	18	K	—
17/16 B.C.E.	Sup 2	*Obv.* Same as No. 28. *Rev.* Same as No. 28. inscr. עבדת . . . נבטו שנת 14 (Obodas the king of the Nabataeans. Year 14)	S	1/1	4.25	20	MR	—
15/14 B.C.E.	Sup 3	*Obv.* Same as No. 28; in field. l. ח *Rev.* Same as No. 28; in field, l. ח around, inscr. [עבדת] מלך נבטו שנת 16	S	1/1	4.89	17	MR	—

Date	No.		M	Dies O/R	Wt Gr	Diam Mm	Coll	Published in
		(Obodas king of the Nabataeans. Year 16)						
14/13 B.C.E.	32	*Obv.* Same as No. 28; in field l., ח *Rev.* Same as No. 28; inscr. עבדת מלך נבטו שנת 17 (Obodas, king of the Nabataeans. Year 17); in field l., ח	S	2/2	4.35 4.32	17 18	ROS K	—
14/13 B.C.E.	33	*Obv.* Laureate head of Obodas III r. *Rev.* Same as No. 31; inscr. עבדת מלך נבטו [שנת] 17 (Obodas, king of the Nabataeans. [Year] 17)	B	1/1	5.92	20	K	—
13/12 B.C.E.	34	*Obv.* Same as No. 28; in field, l., ח *Rev.* Same as No. 28; inscr. עבדת מלך נבטו שנת 18 (Obodas, king of the Nabataeans. Year 18); in field l., ח	S	1/1	4.39 4.35	17 16	CDM CDM	D 13 (D 12)
13/12 B.C.E.	35	*Obv.* Laureate head of Obodas III r. *Rev.* Same as No. 31; inscr. עבדת מלך נבטו שנת 18 (Obodas ,king of the Nabataeans. Year 18);	B	3/3	3.17 4.59 4.38 4.21	20 19/22 20 19	MR K GRO K	—
12/11 B.C.E.	36	*Obv.* Same as No. 25. *Rev.* Same as No. 31; inscr. עבדת מלכא מלך נבטו שנת 19 (Obodas the king, king of the Nabataeans. Year 19)	B	1/1	4.12 5.20	19 20	MR HU	—
12/11 B.C.E.	37	*Obv.* Same as No. 25; in field r., o *Rev.* Same as No. 31; inscr. עבדת מלכא מלך נב[טו] (Obodas the king, king of the Naba[taeans]); in field, שנת 19 (year 19)	B	1/1	3.50	20	K	—
11/10 B.C.E.	38	*Obv.* Same as No. 28. *Rev.* Same as No. 28; inscr. עבדת מלך נבטו שנת 20 (Obodas, king of the Nabataeans. Year 20); in field l., ח	S	1/1	4.37 ?	17 18	BM PAP	BMC 2
10/9	39	*Obv.* Same as No. 31.	B	1/2	4.24	18/20	ASH	—

Date	No.		M	Dies O/R	Wt Gr	Diam Mm	Coll	Published in
B.C.E.		*Rev.* Same as No. 31; inscr. עבדת מלך נבטו שנת 21 (Obodas, king of the Nabataeans. Year 21); in field, o ח			4.32	19	K	
10/9 B.C.E.	39A	Same as No. 39, but with ח on *rev.* between שנת and the numeral 20	B	Num	4.22 4.88 4.83 4.46	19 20 20 19	MUN B SBF BER	—
		Syllaeus, 9 B.C.E.						
9 B.C.E.	40	*Obv.* Diademed head of Obodas III r.; in field l., no. 2 *Rev.* Eagle standing l.; in field, ש ח	S	1/2	1.89 2.21	13 14	K SBF	—
9 B.C.E.	41	*Obv.* Same as No. 40; in field l., ח *Rev.* Eagle standing r.; in field, ח ש	S	1/1	2.27 2.25	13 13/11	CAM DS	(D 36)
	Sup 4	*Obv.* Same as No. 40; *Rev.* Two letters in wreath: ח ש (perforated).	S	2/2	0.86 1.15	13mm 12 mm	MR* HAR	—
9	42	*Obv.* Same as No. 40; in field l., no. 2 *Rev.* Two cronucopiae crossed; in field, no. 2	B	1/2	 2.56 2.19	13/15 15 14	KIR ANS ROS	—
9 B.C.E.	43	Same as No. 42, but with ש between the cornucopiae.	B	2/2	4.13 3.44 4.05	17 15/17 17	MR HU K	—
9 B.C.E.	43A	Same as No. 43, but with o instead of ש on *rev.* l.	B	1/1	3.21	14	K	—
9 B.C.E.	44	*Obv.* Laureate head of Aretas IV r.; in field, ח ש *Rev.* Two cornucopiae crossed; on r., ח, on l., monogram no. 3 (= שלי, Syllaeus)	B	Num	1.75 2.47 2.13 2.09 2.08	13 13/15 13/15 14 13	SBF SBF K ROS K	DS
9 B.C.E.	45	*Obv.* Same as No. 44 (same die); *Rev.* Two cornucopiae crossed; between them, ש	B	1/1	2.62	16	SBF	—

Date	No.	Aretas IV, 9 B.C.E. — 40 C.E.	M	Dies O/R	Wt Gr	Diam Mm	Coll	Published in
9 B.C.E.	46	*Obv.* Jugate busts r. of Aretas IV and of Ḥuldu, their hair diademed; in field l., ח *Rev.* Eagle standing l.; around, inscr. חרתת מלכ[א מלך] נבטו שנת חדה (Aretas [the] king, [king of] the Nabataeans. Year one); in field, ח o	S	1/1	6.94	19	SAS	—
9 B.C.E.	47	*Obv.* Jugate busts r. of Ḥuldu and of Aretas IV; Ḥuldu veiled with veil in crude style. *Rev.* Diademed bust of Aretas IV r.; around, inscr. חרתת מלך נבטו שנת חדה (Aretas, king of the Nabataeans. Year one); in field l., ח	S	1/1	4.71 4.02	17 16.5	CDM CDM	—
9 B.C.E.	47A	*Obv.* Same as No. 47, except that veil is much smaller. *Rev.* Same as No. 47; inscr. חרתת מלך נבטו שנת חדה (Aretas, king of the Nabataeans. Year one). No letter in field l.	S	1/1	3.97	17	BM	—
9/8 B.C.E.	48	*Obv.* Laureate head of Aretas IV r.; around, inscr. חרתת מלך נבטו [רחם ע]מ[ה] (Aretas, king of the Nabataeans, [the lover of his peop]le) *Rev.* Bust of Ḥuldu r., veiled; around, inscr. חלדו מלכת נבטו שנת חדה (Ḥuldu, queen of the Nabataeans. Year one)	S	1/1	3.86	15/17	HU	—
9/8 B.C.E.	49	*Obv.* Laureate head of Aretas IV r., around, inscr. חרתת[ח] מלך נבטו רחם [עמה] ([A]retas, king of the Nabataeans, the lover of [his people]); in field, ח o *Rev.* Veiled bust of Ḥuldu r., wearing earring; around, inscr. חלדו מלכת נבטו שנת 1 (Ḥuldu, queen of the Nabataeans. Year 1); in field, ח o	S	Num	4.47 4.74 4.54 4.52 4.47 4.35	18 18 18 18 17 19	CDM KAD WILL SP ROS CDM	D 17
9/8	49A	Same as No. 49, but without	S	2/2	4.35	18	CDM	D 18

Date	No.		M	Dies O/R	Wt Gr	Diam Mm	Coll	Published in
B.C.E.		letter and mark on *rev.* Also earring of Ḥuldu has different shape. *Obv.* of coin in the BM from die identical with *obv.* of No. 49 in ROS collection.			4.59	17/18	BM	
9/8 B.C.E.	Sup 5	*Obv.* Same as No. 49; in field r., 1ש (year 1) *Rev.* Same as No. 49; in field r., 1 ש (year 1)	S	1/1	1.55	12	Z	—
8/7 B.C.E.	50	*Obv.* Diademed bust(?) of Aretas IV r.; inscr. חרתת מלך נבטו שנת תרתין (Aretas, king of the Nabataeans. Year two); in field l., ח *Rev.* Veiled bust of Ḥuldu r.; around, inscr. חלדו מלכת נבטו שנת תרתין (Ḥuldu, queen of the Nabataeans. Year two); in field l., ח	S	2/2	4.24 4.32	17 18	SAS CDM	— D. 19
8/7 B.C.E.	51	*Obv.* Laureate head of Aretas IV r.; around, inscr. [חר]תת מלך נבטו רחם [עמה] ([Are]tas, king of the Nabataeans, the lover of [his people]) *Rev.* Veiled bust of Ḥuldu r., wearing earring; around, inscr. 2 שנת [חלדו מלכת נבטו] ([Ḥuldu, queen of the Nabataeans.] Year 2); in field l., ח	S	2/2	4.06 4.54	17 17	SP BER	D 20
7/6 B.C.E.	52	*Obv.* Same as No. 50; inscr. [חרתת מלך] נבטו שנת תלת ([Aretas, king of] the Nabataeans. Year three); in field l., ח *Rev.* Same as No. 50; inscr. חלדו מלכ[ת נבטו ש]נת תלת (Ḥuldu, quee[n of the Nabataeans. Y]ear three); in field l.,ח. (Perforated).	S	1/1	4.06	17	K*	—
7/6 B.C.E.	53	*Obv.* Laureate head of Aretas IV r.; around, inscr. חרתת [נבטו] מלך רחם עמה (Aretas, king of [the Nabataeans], the lover of his people) *Rev.* Veiled bust of Ḥuldu r., wearing earring; around, inscr.	S	2/2	4.60 4.20	16 16	BM DS	D 12

Date	No.		M	Dies O/R	Wt Gr	Diam Mm	Coll	Published in
		חלדו מלכת נבטו שנת 3 Ḥuldu, queen of the Nabataeans. Year 3); in field, ח o						
6/5 B.C.E.	54	*Obv.* Laureate head of Aretas IV r.; around, inscr. [ח]רתת מלך [נב]טו רחם [עמה] ([A]retas, king of [the Naba-] taeans, the lover of [his people]) *Rev.* Veiled bust of Ḥuldu r.; around, inscr. [חלדו מלכת] נבטו שנת 4 ([Ḥuldu, queen of] the Nabataeans. Year 4)	S	1/1	4.20	14/17	BM	D 22
6/5 B.C.E.	55	*Obv.* Diademed head (or bust) of Aretas IV r.; in field, ח o	B	2/2	4.25 6.11 5.05 4.12	20 20 18 18	K ROCK ROS ANS	—
		Rev. Woman (Ḥuldu?) standing l., wearing long dress with girdle, raising r. hand; around, inscr. חרתת מלך נבטו שנת ארבע (Aretas, king of the Nabataeans. Year four); in field, ח o						
6/5 B.C.E.	56	*Obv.* Laureate head of Aretas IV r.; in field, o *Rev.* Same as No. 55, but without girdle; inscr. חרתת מלך נבטו שנת 4 (Aretas, king of the Nabataeans. Year 4); in field, ח o	B	2/3	4.36 5.07 4.88 4.55	20 20 20 18	SBF B SBF CDM	D 23
6/5 B.C.E.	56A	*Obv.* Same as No. 56; in field, r. o *Rev.* Same as No. 56; inscr. [חרתת מלך נב[טו שנת 4 (Year 4. Aretas, king of the Naba[taeans]) (The order of words on this coin differs from that on the preceding one.)	B	1/1	4.82	18	SBF	—
6/5 B.C.E.	57	*Obv.* Same as No. 56. *Rev.* Two cornucopiae crossed; in field, o ח; in centre, date: X (4)	B	2/2	2.24 2.30 2.10	16 15 14	SBF ROS K	—
5/4 B.C.E.	Sup 6	*Obv.* Same as No. 49; the two first letters in the inscrip-	S	1/1	3.96	16	MR	—

Date	No.		M	Dies O/R	Wt Gr	Diam Mm	Coll	Published in
		tion חר are combined. *Rev.* Same as No. 49; inscr. 5 שנת (year 5)						
5/4 B.C.E.	58	*Obv.* Same as No. 56; in field, ח o *Rev.* Same as No. 55; inscr. חרתת מלך נבטו שנת 5 (Aretas, king of the Nabataeans. Year 5); in field, o ח	B	Num	6.40 4.25 4.11 3.96 3.14	20 18 18 18 19	BM BM K BM BER	D 27
5/4 B.C.E.	59	*Obv.* Same as No. 56. *Rev.* Tyche standing r., turreted, wearing long mantle, raising r. hand; around, inscr. חרתת מלך נבטו שנת 5 (Aretas, king of the Nabataeans. Year 5)	B	2/2	6.38 3.40	19 19	CDM K	(D 25)
5/4 B.C.E.	60	*Obv.* Same as No. 56; in field, ח o *Rev.* Same as No. 56; around, beginning on r. below, inscr. חרתת מלך נבטו [רחם] עמה שנת 5 (Aretas, king of the Nabataeans, [the lover of] his people. Year 5); in field, o ח below l., פצ (The letters ח and ר of Aretas are ligatured.)	B	1/2	4.09 3.63	18/19 19	CDM KAD	D 26
5/4 B.C.E.	60A	*Obv.* Same as No. 60. *Rev.* Same as No. 60, but without letter and mark in field, and with פצ written down wards.	B	1/1	4.53	20	ROS	—
5/4 B.C.E.	61	*Obv.* Same as No. 56. *Rev.* Two cornucopiae parallel r., with palm-branch issuing below, inscr. פצאל (Phasael)	B				FRA	—
5/4 B.C.E.	61A	*Obv.* Same as No. 56. *Rev.* Same as No. 61; in field, on r. below, פצ; on l. above, ח	B	Num	1.90 2.62 2.26 1.79 1.71 1.40	13 14 14 14 12/14 14	K KAD GRO KAD KAD ROS	—
5/4 B.C.E.	61B	Same as No. 61A, but without ח on rev.	B	Num	1.90 2.34 1.92	13 13 13	MR HU SBF	D 57?

Date	No.		M	Dies O/R	Wt Gr	Diam Mm	Coll	Published in
					1.51	13	SP	
					1.40	14	KAD	
5/4 B.C.E.	62	*Obv.* Same as No. 56. *Rev.* Same as No. 61; in field, on l. below, פצ, on l. above, חר	B	1/1	1.98 1.90	14 13	SBF ROCK	—
5/4 B.C.E.	62A	Same as No. 62, but with ח in field r. below; above l., פצ	B	3/3	1.93 2.27 2.04	14 13 13	K HU K	—
5/4 B.C.E.	63	*Obv.* Same as No. 56; in field r., ח *Rev.* Two cornucopiae parallel l., with palm-branch issuing from them r.; in field l., פצ	B	2/2	1.91 ?	15 13	SAS CDM	D 57
(5/4 B.C.E)	63A	Same as No. 63, but with פצ on r., and ח on l.	B	1/1	2.01	14	K	—
5/4 B.C.E.	64	*Obv.* Same as No. 56; in field, ח o *Rev.* Two cornucopiae crossed; between them, פצ	B	Num	2.81 2.29 2.15 1.91	14 14 15 14	SBF ROS HU BM	BMC
5/4 B.C.E.	64A	Same as No. 64, but with letter and mark on *obv.* in reverse order.	B	2/2	1.47 2.29 1.90	13 13 13	ANS HU K	—
4/3 B.C.E.	65	*Obv.* Same as No. 56; inscr. [חרתת מלך נב]טו רחם [עמה] ([Aretas, king of the Nabataeans, the lover of [his people]) *Rev.* Same as No. 53; inscr. [חלדו מלכת נבטו] שנת 6 ([Ḥuldu, queen of the Nabataeans.] Year 6); in field r., o	S	1/1	4.62	13	ROS	—
4/3 B.C.E.	66	*Obv.* Same as No. 56; in field, ח o *Rev.* Same as No. 56; inscr. חרתת מלך נבטו שנת 6 (Aretas, king of the Nabataeans. Year 6); in field, o ח	B	3/2	6.09 5.90 5.50	19 19 18	SP CDM GRO	D 28
	67	*Obv.* Same as No. 56. *Rev.* Two cornucopiae crossed, with large or small pomegran	B	Num	2.08 2.30 1.87	13 12/14 13	BM ROS BM	D 53

Date	No.		M	Dies R/O	Wt Gr	Diam Mm	Coll	Published in
		ates hanging down towards centre, sometimes without pomegranates; in centre, חר			1.26	14	BM	
	68	*Obv.* Same as No. 56. *Rev.* Two cornucopiae crossed; between them, monogram no. 4 (= חר)	B	Num	2.12 2.10 1.89 1.20	14 14 14 14	BM CAM BM ROS	D 54
	68A	Same as No. 68, but in crude style.	B	1/1	1.01	12	SBF	—
	69	*Obv.* Same as No. 56; in field r., ח *Rev.* Two cornucopiae crossed; between them, ח; in field, on r., ח , on l., o	B	Num	1.76 1.80 1.60	13 14 13	BM ROS BM	—
	69A	Same as No. 69, except that *obv.* has on r., o, on l., ח	B	1/1	1.75	14	K	—
	70	Same as No. 69, except that *rev.* is without letters in field on r. and on l.	B	2/2	1.95 2.21	13 14	SBF K	—
	71	*Obv.* Same as No. 56. *Rev.* Two cornucopiae crossed; between them, monogram and mark no. 5	B	2/2	1.39 1.50	13 13	SBF GRO	—
	72	Same as No. 71, except that, between cornucopiae, mark and letter ח̊	B	1/1	1.04	13	ROCK	—
	73	*Obv.* Same as No. 56; in field l., monogram no. 6 (= חר) *Rev.* Two cornucopiae crossed; between them, o; in field, on r., no. 6, on l., no. 6 (= חר)	B	2/2	1.25 1.09	14 14	K KAD	—
	73A	Same as No. 73, but with ח instead of monograms on *obv.* and *rev.*	B	Num	1.95 2.47 2.23 1.77 1.40	14 15 13 14 14	ROS HA BM BM ROS	BMC
	74	*Obv.* Same as No. 56. *Rev.* Two cornucopiae crossed; between them, o; at junction of cornucopiae, (over,) ח	B	1/1	2.19	14	ANS	—
	75	*Obv.* Same as No. 56; in	B	1/1	1.97	13	SBF	—

Date	No.		M	Dies R/O	Wt Gr	Diam Mm	Coll	Published in
		field r., ח *Rev.* Two cornucopiae crossed; between them, caduceus; in field, on r., o, on l., ח						
	76	*Obv.* Same as No. 56; in field r., ח *Rev.* Two cornucopiae crossed; between, them, caduceus; on staff of caduceus, above, ח below, o; in field l., ח	B	Num	2.25 2.69 2.38 1.55 1.53 1.30	14 10/12 13 13 13 10/12	K GRO K ROS KIR SBF	 NCh 2
	77	*Obv.* Same as No. 56. *Rev.* Two cornucopiae crossed; in field, on r., ח, on l., o	B	2/2	2.11 2.30	13 14	SAS K	—
	78	*Obv.* Laureate head of Aretas IV l., this being the only instance in Nabataean numismatics of a king's head turning l.; in field l., ח *Rev.* Two cornucopiae crossed; in field r., ח	B	1/1	1.66	13	SBF	—
1/2 C.E.	79	*Obv.* Laureate head of Aretas IV r., with long, wavy hair hanging down on nape of neck; around, inscr. חרתת מלך נבטו רחם עמה מעה כסף (Aretas, king of the Nabataeans, the lover of his people. A silver *ma'ah*) *Rev.* Laureate bust of Ḥuldu r., with veil coming down to nape of neck and to shoulders, wearing earring; around, inscr. חלדו מלכת נבטו שנת עשר (Ḥuldu, queen of the Nabataeans. Year ten)	B	3/4	10.94 11.26 10.75 10.50 9.35	23.5 24 23 24 24	K BM SBF MR CDM	D 33
1/2 C.E.	79A	Same as No. 79, except that *obv.* has countermark on neck of Aretas IV, no. 7 (= monogram of חר, struck upside down)	B	1/1	10.20	22	BM	BMC 6
1/2 C.E.	80	*Obv.* Same as No. 79; inscr. חרתת מלך נבטו רחם עמה (Aretas, king of the Nabataeans, the lover of his people) *Rev.* Eagle standing l.; around, inscr. 10 חצ כסף שנת (A half-silver. Year 10)	B	Num	5.10 6.31 6.19 5.73 5.63 5.16	19 20 19 19 21 19	CDM B SBF ROS CDM CDM	D 32

Date	No.		M	Dies R/O	Wt Gr	Diam Mm	Coll	Published in
(1/2 C.E.)	81	*Obv.* Laureate head of Aretas IV r. *Rev.* Wreath; within wreath, inscr. רבע (Quarter)	B	2/2	2.30 2.43 3.18	14 13 15	ROCXK KAD ROS	—
(1/2 C.E.)	81A	Same as No. 81, except that on *rev.* countermark similar to that on No. 79A.	B	1/1	1.75	14	FR	—
(1/2 C.E.)	82	*Obv.* Head of Aretas IV r.; in field l., ח *Rev.* Wreath; within, inscr. רבו (Quart/er) ע	B	1/1	3.11	14	K	—
2/3 C.E.	83	*Obv.* Same as No. 79; on neck countermark, as on No. 79A; around, inscr. חרתת מלך נבטו רחם עמה מעה כסף (Aretas, king of the Nabataeans, the lover of his people. A silver *ma'ah*) countermark as on No. 79A *Rev.* Same as No. 79; inscr. חלדו מלכת נבטו שנת 11 (Ḥuldu, queen of the Nabataeans. Year 11)	B	1/1	14.16	23/25	SBF	—
2/3 C.E.	84	*Obv.* Same as No. 79; inscr. חרתת מלך נבטו רחם עמה (Aretas, king of the Nabataeans, the lover of his people) *Rev.* Same as No. 80; inscr. חצ כסף שנת 11 (A half-silver. Year 11)	B	Num	5.34 7.25 5.50 3.60 6.03	19 19 20 18 20	K SBF B ROS K	—
4/5 C.E.	85	*Obv.* Same as No. 79; inscr. חרתת מלך נבטו רחם עמה (Aretas, king of the Nabataeans, the lover of his people); in field r., o *Rev.* Same as No. 79; inscr. חלדו מלכת נבטו שנת 13 (Ḥuldu, queen of the Nabataeans. Year 13); in field r., o	S	1/1		17	SAS	—
5/6 C.E.	86	Same as No. 85, but with date שנת 14 (year 14) on *rev.* which has in field r., ח	S	1/1	4.51	18	K	—
	87	*Obv.* Same as No. 79; in field r., ח *Rev.* Unidentifiable object,	B	1/1	1.97	14	K	—

Date	No.		M	Dies O/R	Wt Gr	Diam Mm	Coll	Published in
		resembling bell with fringes; below, inscr. חגרא (Ḥagra)						
	88	*Obv.* Laurel wreath; in centre, inscr. חר (Are[tas]) *Rev.* Eagle standing l.; on r., ח	B	Num	1.20 1.11 1.27 1.22 1.05	12 12 12 12 12	MR ROS KIR ROCK SBF	NCh 4
	88A	*Obv.* Laurel wreath; in centre, no. 6 *Rev.* Same as No. 88.	B	Num	1.23 1.57 1.22 0.74	11 10 10 8	MR KAD KAD KAD	—
	89	*Obv.* Laurel wreath; in centre: ח̊ *Rev.* Eagle standing r., on l., ח	B	Num	1.15 1.20 0.95 0.98	11 11 11 10	K KAD BEZ KAD	—
	90	*Obv.* Same as No. 88A. *Rev.* Eagle standing r.; in field r. below, palm-branch.	B	2/2	0.74 1.57 0.96	8/10 12 11	KAD KAD KAD	—
	91	Same as No. 88A, except that in centre of laurel wreath on *obv.* monogram no. 6	B	2/2	0.78 1.11	9/10 9/12	SBF KAD	—
	92	*Obv.* Laurel wreath; in centre, monogram and mark, no. 8 *Rev.* Same as No. 89.	B	1/1	1.27 1.74	12 14	SBF KAD	—
	93	*Obv.* Laurel wreath; in centre, letter and mark, ח̊ *Rev.* Same as No. 88.	B	2/2	1.10 1.19	12 12	KAD KAD	—
7/8 C.E.	94	*Obv.* Laureate bust of Aretas IV r., with curly hair descending to nape of neck, draped; around, inscr. חרתת מלך נבטו רחם עמה (Aretas, king of the Nabataeans, the lover of his people); in field, r., monogram no. 6 *Rev.* Laureate bust of Ḥuldu r., draped and veiled, with veil descending to nape of neck; around, inscr. חלדו מלכת נבטו שנת 16 (Ḥuldu, queen of the Nabataeans. Year 16); in field r., monogram no. 6	S	2/3	4.15 4.26 4.20 4.05	15 15 15 16	BER RUD FRA BM	D 38
7/8	94A	Same as No. 94, except that	S	3/2	4.25	15	BER	—

Date	No.		M	Dies O/R	Wt Gr	Diam Mm	Coll	Published in
C.E.		monogram on each side of coin replaced by ח			4.12 4.01	15 15	HU SP	
13/14 C.E.	Sup 7	*Obv.* Same as No. 94A. *Rev.* Same as No. 94, but wearing earring; inscr. חלדו מלכת [נבטו] שנת 22 (Ḥuldu, queen of [the Nabataeans]. Year 22); in field r., monogram no. 6 (This type may once have been silver-plated.)	B	1/1	3.12	16	MR	—
15/16	95	Same as Sup. 7 date: שנת 24 (year 24)	B	2/2	5.85 5.19 4.19 3.16	16 16 15 15	CAM BM SAS V	— (BMC 12)
18/19 C.E.	96	*Obv.* Same as No. 94, but without monogram. *Rev.* Laureate bust of Shuqquailat r., draped and veiled, with veil descending to nape of neck; around, inscr. שקילת מלכת נבטו שנת 27 (Shuqailat, queen of the Nabataeans. Year 27)	S	2/2	4.23 4.25	15 15	SAS BM	—
	97	*Obv.* Aretas IV, laureate, standing to front as soldier, looking l., holding spear (?) in r. hand, supporting with l. sword in scabbard; in field, on l., palm-branch, on r., monogram no. 4 *Rev.* Shuqailat standing l., veiled, wearing long chiton, raising r. hand with palm extended; in field, on l., wreath, on r., in three lines, inscr. שק/יל/ת (Shuqa/ila/t)	B	Num	3.12 2.81 2.64 2.25 1.60	14 14 14 13 15	SAS CDM KIR BM BM	— (NCh 6)
19/20 C.E.	98	*Obv.* Same as No. 94; inscr. חרתת מלך נבטו [רחם עמה] (Aretas, king of the Nabataeans, [the lover of his people]) *Rev.* Same as No. 96; inscr. שקילת מלכת] נבטו שנת 28] ([Shuqailat, queen of] the Nabataeans. Year 28); in field r., o	S	1/1	3.79	14	CDM	D 41

Date	No.		M	Dies O/R	Wt Gr	Diam Mm	Coll	Published in
20/21 C.E.	99	*Obv.* Same as No. 94, but without monogram. *Rev.* Jugate busts r. of Aretas IV, undraped, laureate, with hair hanging down to nape of neck, and of Shuqailat, draped; around, inscr. שקילת מלכת נבטו שנת 29 (Shuqailat, queen of the Nabataeans. Year 29)	S	1/1	3.08	?	?	M 1
21/22 C.E.	100	Same as No. 99, but with date, 30 שנת (Year 30)	S	?	4.24 3.36 3.22	14 ? ?	BM ? ?	D 42 M 2 M 3
22/23 C.E.	101	Same as No. 99, but with date, 31 שנת (Year 31)	S	1/1	3.41	?	?	M 5
23/24 C.E.	102	Same as No. 99, but with date, 32 שנת (Year 32)	S		3.05	?	?	M 6
25/26 C.E.	103	Same as No. 99, but with date, 34 שנת (Year 34)	S	Num	4.19 4.54 4.15 3.75 3.74 3.70	14 15 14 15 14/18 14	SAS BM BM GRO SBF ANS	— BMC BMC
26/27 C.E.	104	Same as No. 99, but with date, 35 שנת (Year 35)	S	1/1	4.14 4.15	14 14	SAS ROCK	—
27/28 C.E.	105	Same as No. 99, but with date, 36 שנת (Year 36)	S	1/1	3.87	14	ANS	—
31/32 C.E.	106	Same as No. 99, but with date, 40 שנת (Year 40)	S	1/1	4.05	15	CDM	D 43
32/33 C.E.	107	Same as No. 99, but with date, 41 שנת (Year 41)	S	1/1	3.01 3.90	14 16	? SBF	M 9
33/34 C.E.	Sup 8	Same as No. 99, but with date: 42 (Year 42)	S	1/1	4.41	20	MR	—
35/36 C.E.	108	Same as No. 99, but with date, 44 שנת (Year 44) MR coin is double struck.	S	2/2	3.77 5.53	16 14	MR ROCK	M 10
37/38 C.E.	109	Same as No. 99, but with date, 46 שנת (Year 46)	S	2/2	3.98 3.52	14 17	CDM MR	D 45
38/39 C.E.	110	Same as No. 99, but with date, 47 שנת (Year 47)	S	?	3.21 3.09	? ?	? ?	M 11 M 12

Date	No.		M	Dies O/R	Wt Gr	Diam Mm	Coll	Published in
39/40 C.E.	111	Same as No. 99, but with date, 48 שנת (Year 48)	S	2/1	3.81 3.77	15 15	CDM K	D 46
	112	*Obv.* Jugate busts r. of Aretas IV and of Shuqailat, the king laureate, with moustache, and with hair hanging down to nape of neck; in field, on r., ש, on l., ח; above, inscr. שלם (= whole) *Rev.* Two cornucopiae crossed; between them, above and below, in three lines, inscr. חרתת/שקי/לת (Aretas/ Shuqai/lat)	B	Num	3.98 4.42 4.35 4.26 4.18 4.16	18 19 19 18 18 18	K GRO CDM BM B CDM	D 50
	113	Same as No. 112, except that on *obv.*, above heads of Aretas and Shuqailat, the same inscr. occurs in monogram, no. 9 (שלם = whole); in field, on r., ש, on l., ח	B	Num	4.08 5.78 4.59 4.19 4.05 3.35	18 17 19 17 18 16/18	K ROS KIR CDM GRO HU	D 51
	114	Same as No. 112, but with V-shaped ornament on heads of Aretas and Shuqailat and without inscr. above them; in field, on r., ש, on l., ח	B	Very Num	4.10 4.04 3.83 3.61	18 17 17 18	K BM BM ANS	D 49
	114A	Same as No. 114, but with technical error in the striking, in that the design of the *obv.* occurs twice, one in incuse.	B	1/1	3.68	17	BM	BMC 19
	114B	Same as No. 114, but carelessly executed.	B	1/1	2.87	16	BET	—
	115	*Obv.* Laureate head of Aretas IV r., with moustache, and with hair coming down to nape of neck; in field r., ח *Rev.* Within wreath, inscr. חרתת (Aretas)	B	Num	1.23 2.02 1.91 1.85 1.65	14 14 12/16 14 14	K SBF SBF KIR HU	NCh 3
	116	*Obv.* Laureate head of Aretas IV r., with hair falling to nape of neck; in field, on r., ח, on l., ש *Rev.* Two cornucopiae crossed; in field, on r., ח, on l., ש	B	3/2	2.14 2.46 2.33 1.97	13/14 14 14 13	K SBF ROS ANS	—
	117	*Obv.* Same as No. 116.	B	1/1	1.80	16.5	ROS	—

Date	No.		M	Dies O/R	Wt Gr	Diam Mm	Coll	Published in
		Rev. Same as No. 116, except that in field r., monogram no. 4						
	118	*Obv.* Same as No. 116. *Rev.* Two cornucopiae crossed, between them, on long branch extanding to below the cornucopiae, a pomegranate in transitional stage between flower and fruit, with particularly high corolla; in field, on r., ח, on l., ש	B	Num	2.41 2.85 2.22 2.00 1.79	13 13/15 13 15 14	BM HU GRO ROS KAD	—
	118A	Same as No. 118, except that cornucopiae, instead of being crossed, are joined together at bottom, between them, kind of shaft resting on base and ending on top in two horns (standard?).	B	1/1	1.77	15	K	—
	119	*Obv.* Head of Aretas IV r.; in field l., ח *Rev.* Veiled head of Shuqailat r.; in field, on r., ח, on l., ש This may be an earlier issue; note the old style portrait	B	3/3	0.66 102 0.89 0.77	11 11/13 10/11 10	SBF KAD KAD SBF	—
	120	*Obv.* Same as No. 116. *Rev.* Same as No. 119, except that in field l., ש	B	3/3	1.18 2.62 1.60	9 8/10 9	SBF KAD KAD	—
	121	*Obv.* Head of Aretas IV r., but smaller than usual. *Rev.* Same as No. 119.	B	2/2	0.82 1.10	10 11	KAD KAD	—
	122	Same as No. 116; in field l., צ (this letter may have been preceded by פ, the two letters פצ standing for פצאל (Phasael), and if this is so, the coin was struck in 4 B.C.E. See coins Nos. 60–64A). *Rev.* Veiled head of Shuqailat (or Ḥuldu?) r.; in field r., ח	B	1/1	1.00	10.5	KIR	NCh
		Malichus II, 40–70 C.E.						
40/41 C.E.	123	*Obv.* Laureate bust of Malichus II r., with hair hanging down to nape of neck; around, inscr.	S	1/1?	4.10 3.21	17 ?	MR ?	M 20

Date	No.		M	Dies O/R	Wt Gr	Diam Mm	Coll	Published in
		מלכו מלכא מלך נבטו שנת 1 (Malichus the king, king of the Nabataeans. Year 1 *Rev.* Veiled bust of Shuqailat II r.; around, inscr. שקילת אחתה מלכת נבטו (Shuqailat his sister, queen of the Nabataeans)						
42/43 C.E.	124	Same as No. 123, but with date, שנת 3 (Year 3)	S	1/2	3.73 3.74 3.27	13 13 13	BER SBF ROCK	M 22
43/44 C.E.	125	Same as No. 123, but with date, שנת 4 (Year 4) (SP coin is double struck).	S	2/2	3.10	?	SP?	M 22A
44/45 C.E.?	126	Same as No. 123, but with date, שנת 5 (Year 5 [6 ?])	S	1/1?	3.30 3.10	14 ?	SP ?	M 22A
45/46 C.E.	127	Same as No. 123, but with date, שנת 6 (Year 6)	S	1/1	2.56	13	ROCK	M 24
46/47 C.E.	128	Same as No. 123, but with date, שנת 7 (Year 7) SP coin is double struck.	S	2/2?	4.22 3.05 3.53	 13 ?	SP ROCK ?	 M 25 M 26
47/48 C.E.	129	Same as No. 123, but with date, שנת 8 (Year 8)	S	1/1	3.22	?	?	M 27
48/49 C.E.	130	Same as No. 123, but with date, שנת 9 (Year 9)	S	1/1	3.85	13/15	BM	D 59
49/50 C.E.	131	Same as No. 123, but with date, שנת 10 (Year 10)	S	1/1	3.02	?	?	M 28
50/51 C.E.	132	Same as No. 123, but with date, שנת 11 (Year 11)	S	1/1	3.24	?	?	M 29
52/53 C.E.	Sup 9	Same as No. 123, but with date, שנת 13 (Year 13)	S	1/1	3.75	15	K	—
54/55 C.E.	133	Same as No. 123, but with date, שנת 15 (Year 15)	S	1/1	3.50	14	ROCK	M 30
55/56 C.E.	134	Same as No. 123, but with date, שנת 16 (Year 16)	S	2/2	3.53 2.97	14 14	K ROCK	— M 31
56/57 C.E.	135	Same as No. 123, but with date, שנת 17 (Year 17)	S	2/2	3.70 3.06	13 14	CDM ROCK	D 59 M 32
59/60 C.E.	136	Same as No. 123, but with date, שנת 20 (Year 20)	S	1/1	3.37	?	?	M 33
60/61	137	Same as No. 123, but with	S	2/2	3.88	14	MR	—

Date	No.		M	Dies O/R	Wt Gr	Diam Mm	Coll	Published in
C.E.		date, 21 שנת (Year 21) (MR coin is double struck).			3.90 3.58	14 14	B K	
61/62 C.E.	138	Same as No. 123, but with date, 22 שנת (Year 22)	S	2/2	3.72 3.80 3.56	15 ? ?	MR ? ?	 M 34 M 35
62/63 C.E.	139	Same as No. 123, but with date, 23 שנת (Year 23)	S	1/1	3.42	?	?	M 36
64/65 C.E.	H8	Same as No. 123, but with date, 25 שנת (Year 25)	S	1/1	3.70	15	MR	—
	140	*Obv.* Jugate heads of Malichus II and Shuqailat II r., the king laureate, with hair hanging down to nape of neck, wearing V-shaped ornament above forehead, the queen laureate; in field, ש מ *Rev.* Two cornucopiae crossed; between them, above and below, in three lines, inscr. מלכו/ שקי/לת (Malichus/ Shuqai/lat)	B	2/2	2.49 2.40	16 15	K K	—
	140A	Same as No. 140, but without letters on *obv.*	B	Num	3.03 2.74 2.52 2.19 1.99	13/16 16 16 15 13	SBF BM BM CDM ASH	D 64
	141	*Obv.* Head (bust?) of Malichus II r., with hair coming down to nape of neck; in field r., מ *Rev.* Wreath, ending above in V; within wreath, inscr. מלכו (Malichus)	B	1/1	1.21	12	K	—
		Rabbel II, 70–106 C.E.						
70/71 C.E.	142	*Obv.* Laureate bust of Rabbel II r., with particularly long hair hanging down to nape of neck, draped; around, inscr. רבאל מלך נבטו שנת 1 (Rabbel, king of the Nabataeans. Year 1) *Rev.* Laureate bust of Shuqailat r., veiled and draped; around, inscr. שקילת אמה מלכת נבטו (Shuqailat his mother, queen of the Nabataeans)	S	1/1	3.21	13	ROCK	M 49

Date	No.		M	Dies R/O	Wt Gr	Diam Mm	Coll	Published in
71/72 C.E.	143	Same as No. 142, but with date, 2 שנת (Year 2)	S	1/1	3.01	?	?	M 51
72/73 C.E.	144	Same as No. 142, but with date, 3 שנת (Year 3)	S	3/2	3.31	14	ROCK	M 52
					3.46	14	ROCK	M 54
					3.44	14	ROCK	M 53
					2.98	?	?	M 55
73/74 C.E.	145	Same as No. 142, but with date, 4 שנת (Year 4)	S	2/2	3.00	13/15	HU	—
					2.98	14	ROCK	M 57
74/75 C.E.	Sup 10	Same as No. 142, but with date, 5 שנת (Year 5)	S	1/1		14	market	—
75/76 C.E.	H 12	Same as No. 142, but with date, 6 שנת (Year 6)	S	1/1	3.57	16	MR	—
	146	*Obv.* Jugate portraits of Rabbel II and Shuqailat r., both laureate, head of Rabbel with very long hair covering nape of neck, but of Shuqailat draped. *Rev.* Two cornucopiae crossed; between them, above and below, in three lines, inscr. רבאל/שקילת/אמה (Rabbel/ Shuqailat/his mother)	B	Num	2.61	17	CDM	D 65
					2.90	14	SBF	
					2.59	16	BM	
					2.40	16	SBF	
					2.30	14	MR	
					2.22	14	KAD	
75/76 C.E.	147	*Obv.* Laureate head of Rabbel II r.; around, inscr. רבאל מלכא מלך נבטו שנת 6 (Rabbel the king, king of the Nabataeans. Year 6) *Rev.* Veiled head of Gamilat r., draped; around, inscr. גמלת אחתה מלכת נבטו (Gamilat his sister, queen of the Nabataeans)	S	2/2	3.22	13	MOM	
					3.40	?	?	M 60
78/79 C.E.	148	Same as No. 147, but with date, 9 שנת (Year 9)	S	1/1	2.73	?	?	M 63
80/81 C.E.	149	Same as No. 147, but with date, 11 שנת (Year 11)	S	1/1	2.53	13	ROCK	M 64
					2.60	13	K	
82/83 C.E.	150	Same as No. 147, but with date, 13 שנת (Year 13)	S	1/1	2.30	?	?	M 70
86/87 C.E.	151	Same as No. 147, but with date, 17 שנת (Year 17)	S	2/2	2.90	14	K	
					2.72	14	ROCK	M 74
					2.35	?	?	M 76

Date	No.		M	Dies R/O	Wt Gr	Diam Mm	Coll	Published in
89/90 C.E.	152	Same as No. 147, but with date, 20 שנת (Year 20)	S	?	2.39 3.57	? 15	? BM	M 81
90/91 C.E.	153	Same as No. 147, but with date, 21 שנת (Year 21)	S	3/2	2.58 3.55 3.20	14.5 14 14	CDM BM MR	—
91/92 C.E.	154	Same as No. 147, but with date, 22 שנת (Year 22)	S	1/1	3.58	14	CDM	—
92/93 C.E.	155	Same as No. 147, but with date, 23 שנת (Year 23)	S	1/1	2.87	?	?	M 82
93/94 C.E.	156	Same as No. 147, but with date, 24 שנת (Year 24)	S	1/1	2.86	13	ROCK	M 83
94/95 C.E.	157	Same as No. 147, but with date, 25 שנת (Year 25)	S	1/1	3.06	?	?	M 84
95/96 C.E.	158	Same as No. 147, but with date, 26 שנת (Year 26)	S	1/1	2.49	13	ROCK	M 85
99/100 C.E.	159	Same as No. 147, but with date, 30 שנת (Year 30)	S	1/1	2.59	?	?	M 90
100/101 C.E.	160	Same as No. 147, but with date, 31 שנת (Year 31)	S	?	2.55 2.39	14 ?	ROCK ?	M 93 M 94
101/102 C.E.	161	Same as No. 147, but with date, 32 שנת (Year 32)	S	1/1	2.44	?	?	M 95
	162	*Obv.* Jugate busts r. of Rabbel II and of Shuqailat his mother; an earlier die (of coin No. 146) from the days of Shuqailat used for a coin of Gamilat. *Rev.* Two cornucopiae crossed; between them, in two lines, inscr. רבאל/גמלת (Rabbel/ Gamilat) Hybrid coin of Nos. 146 and 163.	B	(1/1)	1.82	13	BER	—
	163	*Obv.* Jugate portraits r. of Rabbel II, his head laureate, with particularly long hair coming down to nape of neck, undraped, and of Gamilat, laureate, her bust draped. Crude style, executed in thick lines. *Rev.* Two cornucopiae crossed;	B	Num	2.89 3.78 3.38 3.11 2.97 2.50	18 18 18 17 17 18	CAM BM K MUN ANS SBF	D 73

Date	No.		M	Dies R/O	Wt Gr	Diam Mm	Coll	Published in
		between them, in two lines, inscr. רבאל/גמלת (Rabbel/ Gamilat)						
	163A	*Obv.* Same as No. 163, except that visible in portrait of Rabbel II is part of his shoulders and the mantle on them. The coins are more carelessly executed and struck on smaller flans. *Rev.* Same as No. 163, but with different style of letters, especially the. מ	B	Num	2.86 3.35 3.02 2.85	14 14 14 15	ANS BM HA BM	(D 73)
	164	*Obv.* Jugate busts r. of Rabbel II, laureate, with long hair hair coming down to nape of his neck, draped, and of Ḥagru, laureate, draped. Executed in a more delicate style than coins Nos. 163, 163A. *Rev.* Two cornucopiae crossed; between them, in two lines, inscr. רבאל/הגרו (Rabbel/ Hagru)	B	Num	3.61 3.69 3.09 3.04 2.96 2.80 2.21	13/15 15 13/15 14 11/14 11/15 15	K K SBF RUD ANS HU ROS	BASOR

Coin no.

10 עברת מלכו מלך נבטו/ שנת תרתין

12 מלכו מלכו מלך נבטו / שנ/ ○א

17 מלכו מלכו מלך נבטו ל ש

32 ל[ש]ית מלך נבטו שנת ש[ל]ש

39 עברת מלך נבטו שנת ש / ת ○

47 תרתין מלך נבטו שנת חדה / ה

60 תתין מלך נבטו ראס עמה שנת[ן] / ק ח ○

79 תרתין מלך נבטו ראש עמה מחא כסף/ חדה מלכת נבטו שנת עשר

123 מלכו מלכו מלך נבטו שנ ו / ל[ק]בלת סחתה מלכת נבטו

140 מלך / אחי / ת

142 נבטו מלך נבטו שנת ו/ל[ק]בלת סחת מלכת נבטו

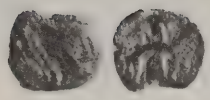
146 נבט/ ל[ק]בל/ סחת

147 נבט מלכ מלך נבטו שנת ע / ל[ק]בלת סחת מלכת נבטו

Selected Inscriptions on Nabataean Coins

1

1A



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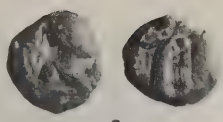

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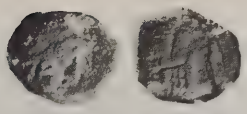
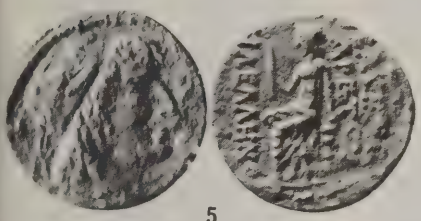


4

SUP1

ARETAS II III



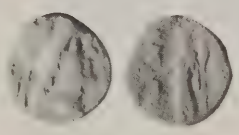
5

6

6A

7

7A



8

ARETAS III

9

10

11

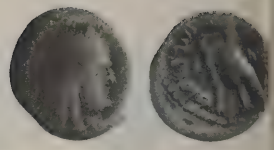
11A

OBODAS II

PLATE 2

12

13



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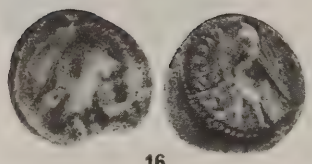

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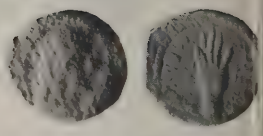

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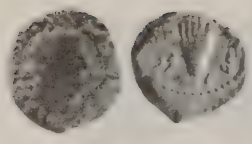

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MALICHUS I

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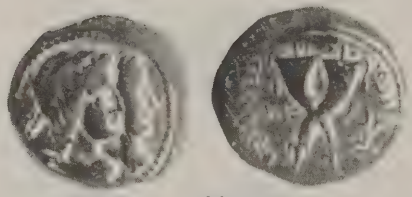

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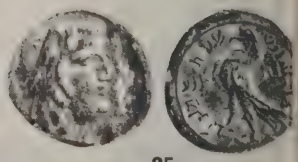

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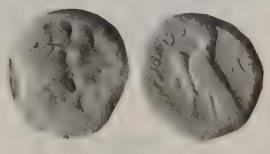

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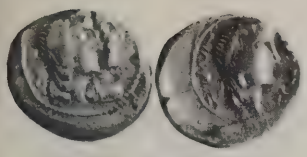

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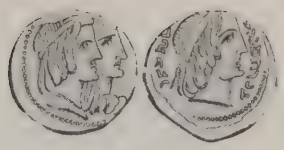

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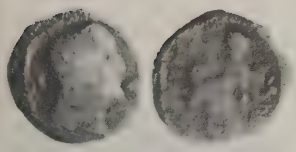

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SUP 2

SUP 3

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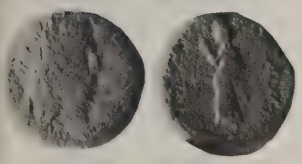

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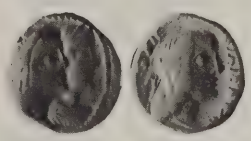

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OBODAS III

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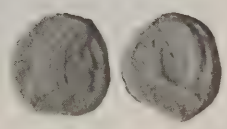
SUP 4



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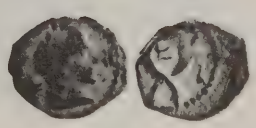

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SYLLAEUS

PLATE 4

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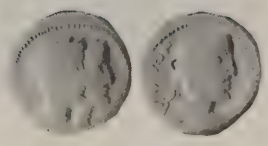

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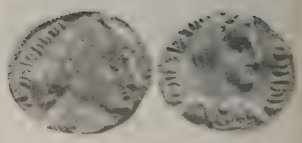

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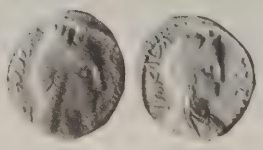

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SUP 5

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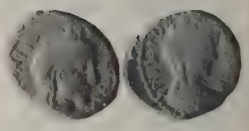

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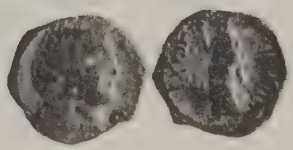

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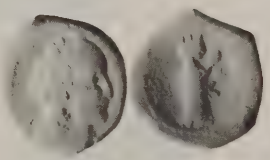

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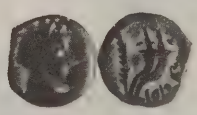

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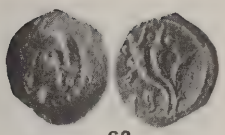
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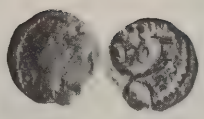
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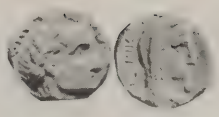
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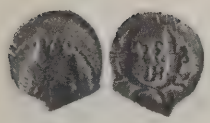
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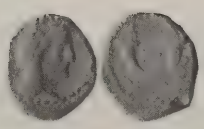
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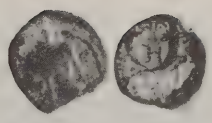
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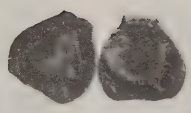
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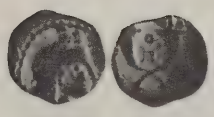
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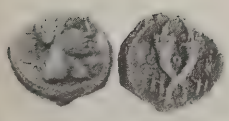
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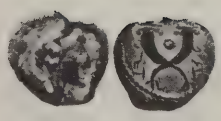
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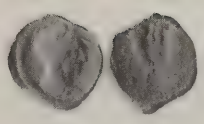
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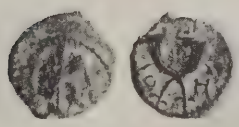
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PLATE 6

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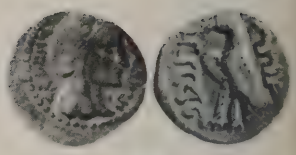

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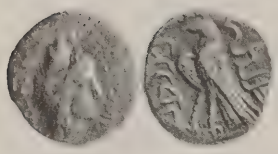

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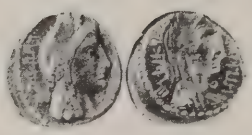

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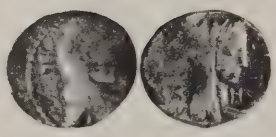

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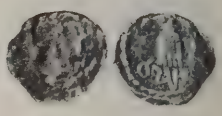

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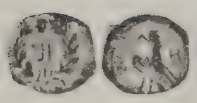

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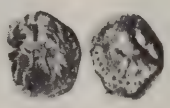

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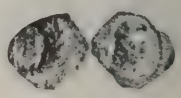

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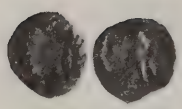

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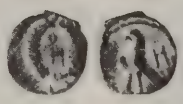

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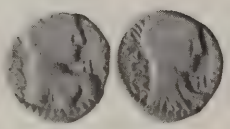

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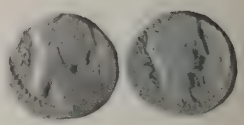

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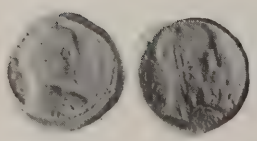

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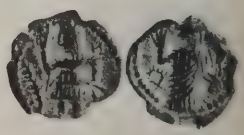

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ARETAS IV

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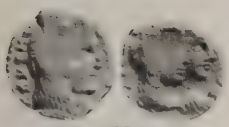
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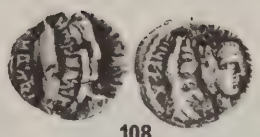
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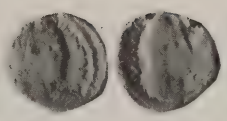
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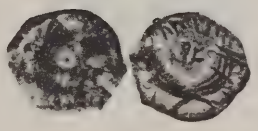
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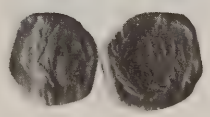
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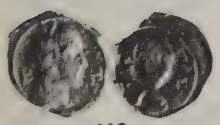
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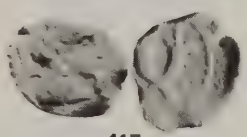
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118A

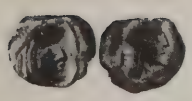
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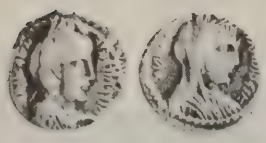
PLATE 8



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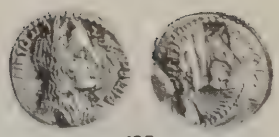

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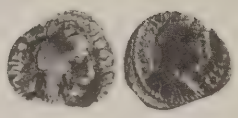
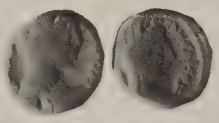
128

130



SUP 9



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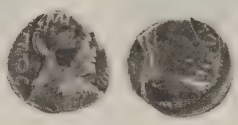

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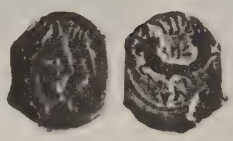

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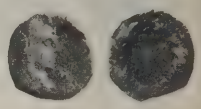
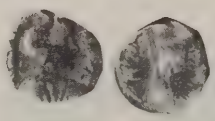


141

MALICHUS II

142



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H12

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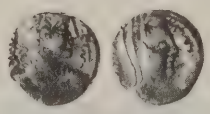
146MR



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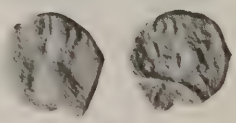

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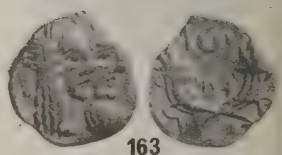

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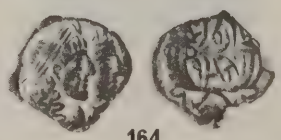

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RABBEL II